



S·BENEDICT

MANUAL FOR OBLATES OF ST. BENEDICT

Prepared by monks of St. John's Abbey
under the direction of the
National Conference of Oblate Directors

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PREFACE

Fourteen centuries ago St. Benedict already realized that it is difficult to lead a Christian life in a de-Christianized world. When still very young he had the courage to flee from the paganism which he could not prevent. Having strengthened himself through years of prayer, penance, and solitude, St. Benedict was willing to undertake the guidance of others that came to him for spiritual direction. Thus began the battle of the sons of St. Benedict against the secularism of that age.

The Christians of today have been told repeatedly by their spiritual leaders that the neopaganism of today is perhaps more subtle, more dangerous, more widespread than the paganism of Greece and Rome at the time of St. Benedict. In every phase of life do Christians meet danger to their souls—in their amusements, in their books and periodicals, in their educational system, in their social life. What is needed desperately is a counter attack that will be effective.

Once more the cry is for leadership, for spiritual direction. Many individuals, as well as families, feel it necessary to make their return to Christ more systematic, more constant. For such as these, membership in lay organizations which

are attached to established religious orders is certain to be the answer.

Today thousands of Catholics throughout the United States have become Oblates of St. Benedict for the sake of the spiritual benefits and the guidance this membership affords. Sometimes alone, sometimes in small groups, Oblates have been very successful in combating secularism, especially as it affects home life, by manifesting Christ-like virtues, particularly the virtue of humility, and thus becoming a new ferment in the society in which they move.

Through emphasis on regularity in prayer and through the sanctification of their hours of work, the Oblates of St. Benedict are creating once more the atmosphere of religious life in the home. The far-reaching results are obvious. From these homes will soon come young aspirants for religious communities as well as aspirants for political office, for social and educational leadership. They will not be merely children of our times but children of God, ardent lay apostles.

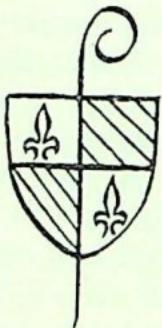
It is the RULE OF ST. BENEDICT which makes us Benedictines, and for the Oblate too it is a matter of the highest importance to become familiar with the RULE. Because human nature is weak, our own will is not a reliable guide to perfection. We therefore substitute a *modus vivendi* that has long been a means of living,

even in the smallest details, according to the will of God. In the measure in which the Oblates live according to the HOLY RULE they will be living according to the spirit of the Gospels, of the Apostles, and of the early Fathers.

This new edition of the MANUAL FOR OBLATES has been thoroughly revised to make it even more helpful than the earlier edition. For the first time the exact words of the principal parts of the HOLY RULE are presented, so arranged that they may be used for daily reading and meditation. In place of the small Offices formerly contained in the MANUAL, daily Prime and Compline and Sunday Vespers are given in English translation, according to the Monastic Breviary, so that the Oblate may share in the Work of God as it is actually carried on in the monastery. The various ceremonies have been somewhat simplified, and the Statutes of the Oblates have been given a new significance by the addition of a number of Declarations made by the First National Conference of Oblate Directors. These changes were suggested by the Oblate Directors assembled at St. Meinrad's Abbey for the Second National Conference last summer, and represent the fruit of their experience and their knowledge of what Oblates would prefer to have in the MANUAL. It is my hope that the new MANUAL will have as wide an appeal as

Abbot Alcuin's original edition. He had recognized the need of many of the changes that have now been made, and would, I am sure, give his blessing to this new publication. May Oblates everywhere find it a source of grace and inspiration.

✠ Baldwin Dworschak, O.S.B.
Abbot of St. John's Abbey



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PART ONE

THE OBLATES OF ST. BENEDICT

CHAPTER I THE LIFE OF ST. BENEDICT AND THE ORIGIN OF THE OBLATES

St. Benedict, whose name in Latin means "blessed," was born about the year 480 in the small town of Nursia (Norcia), about one hundred miles northwest of Rome. Little is known of his parents, except that they were of the ancient Roman nobility and had another child, Scholastica, who was to become a disciple of her brother and be seen by him borne to heaven, after her death, in the form of a dove.

When he was quite a young man, probably not more than twenty, Benedict was sent to Rome for his education; but seeing his companions corrupted by the vices of the city, he

feared for his own salvation and retired to the mountainous solitude of Subiaco, about thirty miles east of Rome. Here he lived as a hermit for three years, known only to a monk of a neighboring monastery, who supplied him with food.

After he had been discovered by shepherds, the report of his holy life drew to him men who desired to profit by his example and instruction. To accommodate them he built twelve monasteries around Subiaco, in each of which he placed twelve monks and an abbot, keeping them, however, under his care and direction.

The increasing fame of his sanctity encouraged even Roman nobles to place their sons under his direction; but it also excited jealousy and persecution. That the welfare of his monks might not be endangered on his account, St. Benedict withdrew from Subiaco and with a few chosen disciples directed his steps to Monte Cassino, a mountain about halfway between Rome and Naples. Here about 529 he wrote his Holy Rule and founded the monastery that was destined to become the most famous in the history of the Church.

St. Benedict died at Monte Cassino about the year 547, after seeing his Rule established in other monasteries founded by his monks. Within two hundred years of his death the Holy Rule

had been adopted in Italy, Spain, France, England and Germany, and by the 13th century it had superseded all other Rules. So great was the number of Benedictine monasteries and so conspicuous their influence in the conversion and civilization of Europe that the centuries from the 6th to the 13th have often been called the "Benedictine centuries."

* * *

From the life of St. Benedict, as told by St. Gregory the Great, it appears that Oblates were received by our holy Father already at Subiaco, before he founded his monastery at Monte Cassino. Apparently, however, these were only boys who were offered (Oblate means "one who is offered") by their parents to be educated for the monastic life. This "oblation" of boys is described in Chapter 59 of the Holy Rule. Nevertheless, St. Gregory's narrative seems to warrant the conclusion that some adults living in the world also put themselves under St. Benedict's direction and visited his monastery occasionally for spiritual instruction and guidance.

The term "oblate," as applied to adults, does not appear to have been in use before the 11th century. But as early as the 9th century we meet the term "confratres," which is the name still used for Oblates in the English Congregation of

Benedictines, and we have evidence that many monasteries had such "confratres" before the 11th century. Thus we find a monk of that time writing: "There are a great many of the faithful, both poor and rich, who request confraternity with us. We give unto all of them participation in whatever good is done in our monastery, be it by prayer or almsgiving. Let us make special prayer for them, both while they live and after their death." These words well describe the relation that still exists in our own day between Oblates and the monastery to which they belong.

A more precise status was given to Oblates by St. William, Abbot of Hirschau (†1091). He established definite rules for two types of Oblates. The Interns or Regular Oblates lived in the monastery and submitted to its discipline without, however, making formal vows. The Externs or Secular Oblates lived in the world but were affiliated with the monastery. They promised obedience and sometimes perfect chastity, and made over a part or the whole of their possessions to the monastery, either immediately or by way of legacy. Historians tell us that large numbers of the faithful thus consecrated themselves to God and to the Order of St. Benedict by uniting themselves as Oblates to such famous monasteries as Cluny, Hirschau, St. Blase, and others. The Holy Roman Emperor, St. Henry II, showed

such great love and veneration for the Order that he has been chosen the special patron of the Oblates.

In the 15th century, St. Frances of Rome (1384-1440) induced a number of noble Roman women to renounce their worldly and extravagant life for a more perfect Christian life in their homes and the exercise of charity to the poor. They made no vows, nor did they wear a special religious habit, but placed themselves under the spiritual direction of the Olivetan Benedictines. Some years later they began to live a community life but merely promised obedience to the superior whom they had chosen to rule over them, styling themselves Oblates of St. Benedict. This original Institute of Oblates, founded by St. Frances, exists in Rome to this day, and the Oblates engage in daily common prayer and acts of charity to the poor and the unfortunate. It is therefore proper that St. Frances of Rome has been made the heavenly patroness of the Oblates of St. Benedict.

The final canonical status of the Oblates was established by a Brief of Pope Leo XIII, dated June 17, 1898. On July 23, 1904, the Sacred Congregation of Bishops and Regulars issued a decree officially approving the Statutes and Rules of the Secular Oblates of St. Benedict, and these Statutes, with a few slight alterations and addi-

tions, were again approved by a Rescript of the Sacred Congregation of Religious on March 24, 1927. This Rescript is still in force for Oblates throughout the world.

CHAPTER II
STATUTES AND DECLARATIONS
OF THE
OBLATES OF ST. BENEDICT

The Statutes of the Oblates of St. Benedict may be likened to a constitution. They define the purpose of the Oblates, lay down the conditions for membership, and recommend the specific good works Oblates are expected to perform. The Statutes and the Holy Rule together form what might be called the Rule for Oblates. It should be remembered, however, that these regulations "do not bind under pain of sin, not even venial sin" (Statute 40).

The most recent approval of the Statutes of the Oblates is that contained in the Rescript of the Sacred Congregation of Religious, granted March 24, 1927. The text presented here is an English translation of this Rescript.

The Declarations appended to certain of the Statutes were formulated by the Oblate Directors of fifteen monasteries in the United States and Canada when they were assembled at St. John's Abbey, Collegeville, Minnesota, for the First National Conference of Oblate Directors, August 26-28, 1949. These Declarations have no formal

approval, but represent the considered policy of the Directors and their interpretation of the Statutes as applied to our own time and circumstances. To avoid confusion with the Statutes, the text of the Declarations is given in *italics*.

STATUTES AND DECLARATIONS

1. The Act of Oblation, made by an Oblate of St. Benedict, is a rite approved by the Church, by which anyone of the faithful living in the world, having been moved by a desire for greater perfection and by a special devotion to the Patriarch of Monks and to his Order, offers himself to God, to our Savior, to the Blessed Virgin Mary and to our holy Father Benedict. By this act he spiritually affiliates himself with a Benedictine monastery and its community, in order thereby to lead a more perfect Christian life in the world according to the spirit of the Rule of St. Benedict; to share likewise in the spiritual treasures of the Benedictine Order and enjoy the special privileges granted by the Church to Oblates; and to promote, as far as lies in his power, the good of the monastery to which he is attached, and of the entire Benedictine Order.

Declaration

Special emphasis should be placed upon the vocational aspect of Oblate life, and only those

should be admitted to membership who truly seek God and have the ability and desire to attain spiritual perfection under the guidance of the Holy Rule and the Statutes for the Oblates. It should be emphasized that the Act of Oblation, rather than investiture with the scapular, is the essential feature of Oblate membership, and that the Oblate should seek perfection by means of those practices and ideals which are given special importance in Benedictine life: the liturgy, the Divine Office, stability, and obedience.

To define the "spiritual treasures of the Benedictine Order" in which the Oblates share, we declare that, since they are truly members of the monastic family, Oblates share in the commemoration of absent brethren which is made at the conclusion of the various Hours of the Divine Office, that they share in all the spiritual works of the monks and especially in the daily conventional Mass, where it is offered for the community.

2. The Oblation is not a vow, nor is it irrevocable, but as it is a deliberate resolve of the will made before God and man and confirmed by a sacred rite, it is worthy of high respect.

Declaration

Oblates, as dutiful sons and daughters of our

Holy Father Benedict and adopted children of the monastery, are to love the monastery of their affiliation and are to maintain some contact with it. Failing this, it is within the prudent discretion of the Abbot to terminate their membership. Oblates themselves, for serious reasons, can terminate their own membership.

3. The faithful of either sex, as well as clerics and priests, may be received as Oblates of any Benedictine monastery by its ruling Abbot or Conventual Prior.

Declaration

Since family life is strengthened when husband and wife possess a common spiritual ideal, both should be encouraged to become Oblates, and if possible should make their Oblation together. This is significant because Benedictine life is impregnated with the family spirit.

However, membership in the Oblates is not limited to family groups. Since the Act of Oblation is intended primarily to aid the individual in attaining Christian perfection, the enrollment of the family or of any group cannot become a condition for membership; nor does the isolation of an individual in any way detract from the bond existing between him and his monastery or deprive him of any opportunity to obtain the spiritual benefits of membership.

4. As it is the duty of Oblates to strive with perseverance to lead a more holy life, only those should be admitted to their number who are commendable for their good morals and good name.

Declaration

The Oblates themselves are encouraged to spread the apostolate among those of their acquaintance who seem to enjoy the necessary qualifications. Discretion should always be used, however, and a true picture of Oblate life and ideals should be carefully presented.

5. Moreover, no one under the age of fifteen shall be accepted as an Oblate Novice.

6. About three months after the first application, or even at once if the perseverance of the candidate can be relied upon, they may receive the medal and the small black scapular of St. Benedict, the latter, from this time on, always to be worn under the ordinary garments.

Declaration

The minimum postulancy of three months is ordinarily to be adhered to, and Directors will not readily grant a dispensation. The period of postulancy may be extended at the discretion of the Director. During this time those who wish to become Oblates should be instructed in the

Oblate life by means of personal contact with the Director, if possible, or at least by means of printed matter outlining the nature and fundamental obligations of Oblate life.

It should be especially noted that on December 1, 1950, the Holy See gave permission for the Oblates of St. Benedict to wear the medal of St. Benedict in place of the scapular.

7. A year and a day after this investiture, the Oblate Novice shall be allowed to make his final Act of Oblation in the presence of the Abbot or Prior.

Declaration

If the ceremony of Final Oblation or of investiture cannot be held in a church or oratory, it may be held in any becoming place at the discretion of the Director or Moderator.

8. The Abbot or Conventional Prior may, however, delegate any priest, secular or regular, to invest an Oblate Novice or receive his final Oblation.

9. The names of the Oblates shall be preserved in the archives of their respective monastery, so that the monks may the more faithfully remember them before God.

10. For serious reasons, Oblates, if they so wish, may be transferred from one monastery to

another by the Abbot of the monastery to which they wish to change, provided they have obtained the written consent of the Abbot of the monastery they are leaving.

Declaration

Those applicants for investiture who live at a great distance from the monastery should be urged to affiliate themselves with a monastery closer to their place of residence, if there is one. Once they are received by a monastery, however, Oblates should not be encouraged to change their stability except for serious reasons. They may attend meetings held for groups belonging to other monasteries.

11. The relation between Oblates and the Benedictine Order is somewhat similar to the relation between the Tertiaries and their respective First Order. Oblates must not, however, be called Tertiaries, because the monastic lawgiver of Monte Cassino wrote only one Rule, and there is but one Order of St. Benedict.

Declaration

Use of the initials "Obl. O.S.B." or "Obl. S.B." should be restricted to private correspondence; they may not be used in any publication without the permission of the Director.

The word “Oblate” should be preferred to the term “Secular Oblate.”

12. In addition to the practice of those virtues on which the whole of the Christian life depends, that is, faith, hope, and charity, Oblates should renounce the pomps and vanities of the world, being mindful of the words of our Savior: “You are not of the world” (John 15:19), and should zealously strive to live according to the words of St. Paul: “Our conversation is in heaven” (Philip. 3:20).

13. They shall especially devote themselves to the practice of penance and prayer, the surest foundations of religion.

14. With an utter contempt for pride, they shall, in accordance with the spirit of the vow of poverty, cultivate a warmhearted generosity towards the poor and the unfortunate, and offer their aid to pious causes.

15. They shall carefully observe chastity according to their state in life.

16. They shall keep the days of fast and abstinence prescribed by the Church.

17. They shall render a filial obedience to the Roman Pontiff, to their Bishops and priests, to their own Director, and to other ecclesiastical

Superiors; nor shall they neglect to obey the civil laws and authorities. In short, though not in any way bound by the vow of obedience, they shall whole-heartedly and respectfully submit themselves to all lawful authority.

18. They shall often read and ponder over the Rule of our holy Father Benedict, and, by constantly employing the tools of the spiritual craft taught in the Rule, they shall direct all their actions towards acquiring that love which, when it is perfect, "casts out fear" (I John 4:18).

19. Oblates should know that they must first of all fulfill the duties of their state in life with the utmost fidelity; for, to neglect what is necessary in order to take upon oneself extraordinary and more perfect obligations is most strongly to be condemned.

20. They shall highly esteem those religious practices which are incumbent upon all the faithful, such as morning and evening prayers, devout assistance at Mass and other sacred functions on Sundays and holy days, prayers before and after meals, and other similar acts of worship.

21. Above all, they must not neglect their family duties upon which the Apostle so strongly insists, saying: "But if any man have not care of his own, and especially of those of his house, he

has denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (I Tim. 5:8).

22. Remembering the precept of our holy Father Benedict: "That nothing is to be preferred to the Work of God" (Holy Rule, ch. 43), Oblates of our Order should zealously cultivate a special love for the sacred liturgy. They should also take an active interest in all that concerns the beauty and adornment of churches and altars, and, in a word, lovingly do what they can to preserve and increase the splendor of divine worship.

23. Priest Oblates will offer the holy Sacrifice with the greatest care and devotion, and dutifully pray the Divine Office with becoming piety and attention. Lay Oblates will, as often as they can, gladly assist at Mass and at the Divine Office chanted by the monks in choir, even on week days; or, if this be not possible, they will at least unite with them in spirit.

24. It is, furthermore, very commendable for Oblates to pray either the Divine Office or the Little Office of our Lady, if this be reasonably possible; for, by so doing, they will offer most acceptable prayers to God in the name of the Church, in thanksgiving for favors already received and in petition for new ones.

Declaration

The recitation of the Divine Office is to be regarded not merely as commendable but as the ideal way for the Oblate to participate in the prayers of his abbey. The Oblate should accordingly be encouraged to say the prayers of the Breviary. It should be remembered, however, that recitation of the Office is not absolutely obligatory. An absolute minimum may be recommended for the individual Oblate who asks for such direction, after his circumstances are taken into consideration. If, as is most often the case, the entire Divine Office cannot be recited, a part of the Office, or even one canonical hour, is to be recommended in preference to other forms of prayer.

25. Among the special devotions which have been approved and recommended by the Church, let Benedictine Oblates give particular preference to the worship of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, and to the adoration of His most Sacred Heart, the secrets of which, we rejoice to say, were first revealed to Saints of our Order.

26. Oblates should, moreover, cultivate a tender devotion to the Immaculate Mother of God, and pay all due honor to the Angels and Saints, in particular to St. Joseph and to our

glorious Father Benedict, and to all the Saints of the Benedictine Order. Let them love to pray the Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary, to make the Way of the Cross, and to carry out other pious exercises which are enriched with indulgences.

27. Let them pray earnestly for the triumph of holy Mother Church, for the spread of religion, for the extirpation of heresies and schisms, for the conversion of infidels, for the repentance of sinners, for the perseverance of the righteous, and for the relief of the souls in purgatory.

28. Finally, in order to follow the traditions of our Order, let the Oblates combine their prayer with work, so that they may ever be numbered among the fervent doers of good works.

In addition to the above, a few very special obligations of Oblates are as follows:

29. Oblates who recite neither the Breviary nor the Little Office of our Lady, and who do not assist at any of the Canonical Hours, should daily pray the Little Office of the Oblates, or five decades of the Rosary.* For a reasonable

*The Little Office of the Oblates was prepared at a time when the Divine Office was not available to the laity in English. Since the present Manual contains the actual

cause, they may ask the Director of the Oblates to replace these by other shorter prayers.

30. Oblates should, each morning, offer their actions of the day to God in honor of the most Sacred Heart of Jesus, in imitation of the example of St. Gertrude the Great.

31. They should, each evening, examine their conscience as to the manner in which these actions have been performed.

32. Oblates should consecrate Tuesday of every week to our holy Father Benedict, and, even if prevented on other week days, should devoutly assist at Mass at least on that day, or, failing in this, should honor their Father by some other good work.

33. Oblates should, once each month, meditate for a half hour before the Blessed Sacrament, or at least during one Mass each month.

34. Oblates should receive holy Communion frequently, even daily, upon the advice of their confessor.

text of some of the Hours of the Divine Office, it has not seemed necessary to include the Little Office, which was merely a substitute. As mentioned in the Declaration to Statute 24, the Oblate who cannot recite the entire Breviary may recite one or the other of the individual Hours, of which Prime, Vespers and Compline are presented in this Manual.

35. Oblates should regularly attend the monthly meetings and conferences conducted by their Director whenever these take place.

Declaration

Meetings of unorganized groups may be held at any place, at the discretion of the Director; but the approval of the Bishop must be obtained if a group is to be formally erected into a Chapter with its own officers, according to Canon 703, paragraph 2.

Oblates should remember that their primary affiliation is to their monastery, not to the local group. Those who can do so are encouraged to visit their abbey either privately or on the occasion of the annual pilgrimage or "Oblate Day," if such is held.

To deepen their spiritual life, Oblates are encouraged to make annually a closed retreat, or at least a day of recollection.

36. Oblates should each year renew their Act of Oblation on the feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (November 21), which is the principal feast of the Oblates.

37. In addition, they should keep the feast of the Purification of the Blessed Virgin (February 2), which was made holy by the oblation of our Savior in the Temple; also the feasts of our holy

Father Benedict (March 21), of St. Henry, Emperor (July 15), and of St. Frances of Rome, Widow (March 9), whom they should venerate as their heavenly Patrons.

38. Priest Oblates may insert the name of our holy Father Benedict in the Confiteor.

Declaration

The attention of priest Oblates is called to the Rescript granted by the Holy See February 28, 1948:

*S. Rituum Congregatio.
Beatissime Pater,*

Bernardus Kaelin, Abbas Primas Ord. S. Benedicti, ad pedes Sanctitatis Vestrae provolutus; humiliter implorat pro Oblatis saecularibus, in statu clericali positis, Ordinis S. Benedicti, facultatem utendi Breviario monastico ad normam Kalendarii monasterii cui vel novitiatus vel professionis vi affiliati sunt, nisi ratione dignitatis episcopalis aut alterius munera sint de gremio alicuius ecclesiae simulque eius choro intervenire debeant.

Item ut diebus praecipuis festivis Ordinis S. Benedicti, videlicet: in festo Transitus S. Benedicti, in eius Solemnitate, in festo S. Scholasticae Virginis, S. Mauri Abbatis, SS. Placidi et Soc. necnon in festo Omnium Sanctorum Ordinis

*Missa propria pro Ordine S. Benedicti approbata
uti possint.*

Ordinis Sancti Benedicti.

S. R. Congregatio, utendo facultatibus sibi specialiter a Sanctissimo Domino Nostro Pio Papa XII tributis, benigne annuit pro gratia iuxta preces, servatis de cetero Rubricis aliisque de jure servandis.

Contrariis non obstantibus quibuscumque.

Die 28 Februarii 1948.

✠ C. Card Micara

Prefectus

✠ A. Carinci, Ach. Seleuc.

Secretarius

39. Oblates may, if they so wish, be buried in the black monastic habit, scapular, and cincture.

Declaration

If the deceased Oblate has not expressed a desire to be buried in the monastic habit, at least the small scapular or a Medal of St. Benedict should be placed upon his person.

40. Oblates should, finally, know that these Statutes and Rules do not bind under pain of sin, not even venial sin.

41. Oblates should have as their mottoes: "**UT IN OMNIBUS GLORIFICETUR DEUS**—That in all things God may be glorified"—and the simple word "**PAX—Peace.**"

CHAPTER III

INDULGENCES FOR OBLATES

Granted by the Brief of Pope Leo XIII
of June 17, 1898.

PLENARY INDULGENCES

1. A Plenary Indulgence can be gained by Oblates of our Order on the day of their reception as Oblate Novices, if they have gone to Confession and received holy Communion.

2. A Plenary Indulgence can be gained by them on the day of their Profession or Final Oblation, if they have gone to Confession and received holy Communion.

3. A Plenary Indulgence can be gained by them on the following special patronal feasts of the Oblates, if they shall have gone to Confession and received holy Communion, and visited any church or public oratory on these days and there prayed according to the intentions of the Pope:

- a) the feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary (November 21),
- b) the feast of St. Henry (July 15), and
- c) the feast of St. Frances of Rome (March 9).

4. A Plenary Indulgence can be gained by them on any other four days of the year, to be

selected once and for all by each Oblate, under the same conditions as in the preceding.

5. A Plenary Indulgence can be gained by them on the feasts of the Patron and of the Titular of the Abbey to which they belong as Oblates; and if the Abbey has several Patrons and Titulars, on the feast of each of these, under the same conditions as in the preceding.

6. A Plenary Indulgence can be gained by them in the hour of death, if, being truly penitent and having gone to Confession and received holy Communion—or, should this be impossible, if, being at least truly penitent—they invoke with their lips or at least in their hearts recall the Name of Jesus and accept death from the hand of God with due resignation as the punishment of sin.

PAPAL BLESSING WITH PLENARY INDULGENCE

The Papal Blessing with a Plenary Indulgence attached can be received by Oblates as follows:

Twice each year, on any two days selected once and for all, when the Oblates, having gone to Confession and received holy Communion, are publicly assembled in some church or public oratory under their respective Moderator or Director, according to the prescribed rite (see page 176).

GENERAL ABSOLUTION WITH PLENARY INDULGENCE

The Oblates may also receive General Absolution to which a Plenary Indulgence is attached, either when assembled together in common (as described in the preceding) under their respective Moderator, or privately from their confessor immediately after they have gone to Confession, according to the prescribed rite (see page 183) on the following feasts (or in the afternoon or evening preceding these feasts) :

- a) the Immaculate Conception (December 8),
- b) the Purification of the Blessed Virgin Mary (February 2),
- c) the feast of St. Joseph, Spouse of the Mother of God (March 19),
- d) the Friday within the octave of Corpus Christi,
- e) the Nativity of St. John the Baptist (June 24),
- f) the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul (June 29),
- g) the Exaltation of the Holy Cross (September 14), and
- h) the feast of All Saints of the Order of St. Benedict (November 13).

INDULGENCES OF SEVEN YEARS AND SEVEN QUARANTINES

1. An indulgence of Seven Years and Seven Quarantines can be gained by Oblates as often as they assist at Mass, with a contrite heart, for the repose of the souls of deceased Oblates.
 2. The same indulgence can be gained by them also as often as they offer a stipend for a Mass to be celebrated for the souls of deceased Oblates.
 3. This same indulgence can be gained by them as often as they assist at the funeral of a deceased Oblate.
 4. And again, they can gain this same indulgence as often as they take part in the monthly meeting of the Oblates.
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Oblates should particularly note the following with regard to the preceding indulgences:

1. All of the above indulgences are applicable to the souls in purgatory.
2. Oblates living in places where there is no Benedictine church may gain the indulgences which require a visit to such a church by visiting any church or public oratory instead.
3. If Oblates are prevented from receiving holy Communion or visiting the church on the

prescribed day, they can gain all the above indulgences by fulfilling the necessary conditions on the following Sunday.

4. Whenever an hour of prayer or meditation is prescribed for gaining an indulgence, this hour may be reduced to a half hour, and this condition may even be satisfied during the time of the holy sacrifice of the Mass in the morning of the day in question.

5. Whenever the Oblates are unable to go to Confession on the afternoon or evening before a feast, or on the feast itself, for the purpose of receiving General Absolution in the confessional itself, they have the privilege of receiving this General Absolution from their confessor immediately after they have gone to Confession on any of the seven days following the respective feasts.

8. Since Oblates are expected to wear or carry about their person a medal of St. Benedict, they should know that they can therefore gain the indulgences attached to this medal. A summary of these indulgences is given on pages 195-198.

CHAPTER IV

THE HOLY RULE OF ST. BENEDICT

It has seemed desirable to give only the principal portions of the Holy Rule in this place. The complete text would have made the Manual unusually large; and certain portions of the Rule are of only incidental interest to Oblates. The titles of all the Chapters have been given, however, so that the reader may have a comprehensive view of the Rule as it was prepared by our holy Father Benedict. The text has been marked for daily reading, so that the Oblate may read and meditate upon the basic principles of the Rule at least once each month. The portion of the Rule assigned for the day may also be read at the recitation of Prime (see page 91).

THE HOLY RULE

1st day

THE PROLOGUE

Listen, my son, to your master's precepts, and incline the ear of your heart. Receive willingly and carry out effectively your loving father's advice, that by the labor of obedience you may return to Him from whom you had departed by the sloth of disobedience.

To you, therefore, my words are now addressed, whoever you may be, who are renouncing your own will to do battle under the Lord Christ, the true King, and are taking up the strong, bright weapons of obedience.

And first of all, whatever good work you begin to do, beg of Him with most earnest prayer to perfect it, that He who has now deigned to count us among His sons may not at any time be grieved by our evil deeds. For we must always so serve Him with the good things He has given us, that He will never as an angry Father disinherit His children, nor ever as a dread Lord, provoked by our evil actions, deliver us to everlasting punishment as wicked servants who would not follow Him to glory.

Let us arise, then, at last, for the Scripture stirs us up, saying, "Now is the hour for us to rise from sleep." Let us open our eyes to the deifying light, let us hear with attentive ears the warning which the divine voice cries daily to us, "Today if you hear His voice, harden not your hearts." And again, "He who has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches." And what does He say? "Come, My children, listen to Me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. Run while you have the light of life, lest the darkness of death overtake you."

And the Lord, seeking His laborer in the mul-

titude to whom He thus cries out, says again, "Who is the man who will have life, and desires to see good days?" And if, hearing Him, you answer, "I am he," God says to you, "If you will have true and everlasting life, keep your tongue from evil and your lips that they speak no guile. Turn away from evil and do good; seek after peace and pursue it. And when you have done these things, My eyes shall be upon you and My ears open to your prayers; and before you call upon Me, I will say to you, 'Behold, here I am.' "

What can be sweeter to us, dear brethren, than this voice of the Lord inviting us? Behold, in His loving kindness the Lord shows us the way of life.

2nd day

Having our loins girded, therefore, with faith and the performance of good works, let us walk in His paths by the guidance of the Gospel, that we may deserve to see Him who has called us to His kingdom.

For if we wish to dwell in the tent of that kingdom, we must run to it by good deeds or we shall never reach it.

But let us ask the Lord, with the Prophet, "Lord, who shall dwell in Your tent, or who shall rest upon Your holy mountain?"

After this question, brethren, let us listen to

the Lord as He answers and shows us the way to that tent, saying, "He who walks without stain and practices justice; he who speaks truth from his heart; he who has not used his tongue for deceit; he who has done no evil to his neighbor; he who has given no place to slander against his neighbor."

It is he who, under any temptation from the malicious devil, has brought him to naught by casting him and his temptation from the sight of his heart; and who has laid hold of his thoughts while they were still young and dashed them against Christ.

It is they who, fearing the Lord, do not pride themselves on their good observance; but, convinced that the good which is in them cannot come from themselves and must be from the Lord, glorify the Lord's work in them, using the words of the Prophet, "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Your name give the glory." Thus also the Apostle Paul attributed nothing of the success of his preaching to himself, but said, "By the grace of God I am what I am." And again he says, "He who glories, let him glory in the Lord."

Hence the Lord says in the Gospel, "Whoever listens to these words of Mine and acts upon them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on rock. The floods came, the winds

blew and beat against that house, and it did not fall, because it was founded on rock."

Having given us these assurances, the Lord is waiting every day for us to respond by our deeds to His holy admonitions. And the days of this life are lengthened and a truce granted us for this very reason, that we may amend our evil ways. As the Apostle says, "Do you not know that God's patience is inviting you to repent?" For the merciful Lord tells us, "I desire not the death of the sinner, but that he should be converted and live."

3rd day

So, brethren, we have asked the Lord who is to dwell in His tent, and we have heard His commands to anyone who would dwell there; it remains for us to fulfill those duties.

Therefore we must prepare our hearts and our bodies to do battle under the holy obedience of His commands; and let us ask God that He be pleased to give us the help of His grace for anything which our nature finds hardly possible. And if we want to escape the pains of hell and attain life everlasting, then, while there is still time, while we are still in the body and are able to fulfill all these things by the light of this life, we must hasten to do now what will profit us for eternity.

And so we are going to establish a school for the service of the Lord. In founding it we hope to introduce nothing harsh or burdensome. But if a certain strictness results from the dictates of equity for the amendment of vices or the preservation of charity, do not be at once dismayed and fly from the way of salvation, whose entrance cannot but be narrow. For as we advance in the religious life and in faith, our hearts expand and we run the way of God's commandments with unspeakable sweetness of love. Thus, never departing from His school, but persevering in the monastery according to His teaching until death, we may by patience share in the suffering of Christ and deserve to have a share also in His kingdom.

Chapter 1

ON THE KINDS OF MONKS

4th day

Chapter 2

WHAT KIND OF MAN THE ABBOT OUGHT TO BE

An Abbot who is worthy to be over a monastery should always remember what he is called,

and live up to the name of Superior. For he is believed to hold the place of Christ in the monastery, being called by a name of His, which is taken from the words of the Apostle: "You have received a Spirit of adoption as sons, by virtue of which we cry, 'Abba—Father!'"

Therefore the Abbot ought not to teach or ordain or command anything which is against the Lord's precepts; on the contrary, his commands and his teaching should be a leaven of divine justice kneaded into the minds of his disciples.

Let the Abbot always bear in mind that at the dread Judgment of God there will be an examination of these two matters: his teaching and the obedience of his disciples. And let the Abbot be sure that any lack of profit the master of the house may find in the sheep will be laid to the blame of the shepherd. On the other hand, if the shepherd has bestowed all his pastoral diligence on a restless, unruly flock and tried every remedy for their unhealthy behavior, then he will be acquitted at the Lord's Judgment and may say to the Lord with the Prophet: "I have not concealed Your justice within my heart; Your truth and Your salvation I have declared. But they have despised and rejected me." And then finally let death itself, irresistible, punish those disobedient sheep under his charge.

Therefore, when anyone receives the name of Abbot, he ought to govern his disciples with a twofold teaching. That is to say, he should show them all that is good and holy by his deeds even more than by his words, expounding the Lord's commandments in words to the intelligent among his disciples, but demonstrating the divine precepts by his actions for those of harder hearts and ruder minds. And whatever he has taught his disciples to be contrary to God's law, let him indicate by his example that it is not to be done, lest, while preaching to others, he himself be found reprobate, and lest God one day say to him in his sin, "Why do you declare My statutes and profess My covenant with your lips, whereas you hate discipline and have cast My words behind you?" And again, "You were looking at the speck in your brother's eye, and did not see the beam in your own."

Let him make no distinction of persons in the monastery. Let him not love one more than another, unless it be one whom he finds better in good works or in obedience. Let him not advance one of noble birth ahead of one who was formerly a slave, unless there be some other reasonable ground for it. But if the Abbot for just reason think fit to do so, let him advance one of any rank whatever. Otherwise let them keep their due places; because, whether slaves or free-

men, we are all one in Christ and bear an equal burden of service in the army of the same Lord. For with God there is no respect of persons. Only for one reason are we preferred in His sight: if we be found better than others in good works and humility. Therefore let the Abbot show equal love to all and impose the same discipline on all according to their deserts.

5th day

In his teaching the Abbot should always follow the Apostle's formula: "Reprove, entreat, rebuke"; threatening at one time and coaxing at another as the occasion may require, showing now the stern countenance of a master, now the loving affection of a father. That is to say, it is the undisciplined and restless whom he must reprove rather sharply; it is the obedient, meek and patient whom he must entreat to advance in virtue; while as for the negligent and disdainful, these we charge him to rebuke and correct.

And let him not shut his eyes to the faults of offenders; but, since he has the authority, let him cut out those faults by the roots as soon as they begin to appear, remembering the fate of Heli, the priest of Silo. The well-disposed and those of good understanding let him correct with verbal admonition the first and second time. But bold, hard, proud and disobedient characters he

should curb at the very beginning of their ill-doing by stripes and other bodily punishments, knowing that it is written, "The fool is not corrected with words," and again, "Beat your son with the rod and you will deliver his soul from death."

The Abbot should always remember what he is and what he is called, and should know that to whom more is committed, from him more is required. Let him understand also what a difficult and arduous task he has undertaken: ruling souls and adapting himself to a variety of characters. One he must coax, another scold, another persuade, according to each one's character and understanding. Thus he must adjust and adapt himself to all in such a way that he may not only suffer no loss in the flock committed to his care, but may even rejoice in the increase of a good flock.

Above all let him not neglect or undervalue the welfare of the souls committed to him, in a greater concern for fleeting, earthly, perishable things; but let him always bear in mind that he has undertaken the government of souls and that he will have to give an account of them.

And if he be tempted to allege a lack of earthly means, let him remember what is written: "First seek the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be given you besides."

And again: "Nothing is wanting to those who fear Him."

Let him know, then, that he who has undertaken the government of souls must prepare himself to render an account of them. Whatever number of brethren he knows he has under his care, he may be sure beyond doubt that on Judgement Day he will have to give the Lord an account of all these souls, as well as of his own soul.

Thus the constant apprehension about his coming examination as shepherd concerning the sheep entrusted to him, and his anxiety over the account that must be given for others, make him careful of his own record. And while by his admonitions he is helping others to amend, he himself is cleansed of his faults.

6th day

Chapter 3

ON CALLING THE BRETHREN FOR COUNSEL

Whenever any important business has to be done in the monastery, let the Abbot call together the whole community and state the matter to be acted upon. Then, having heard the

brethren's advice, let him turn the matter over in his own mind and do what he shall judge to be most expedient. The reason we have said that all should be called for counsel is that the Lord often reveals to the younger what is best.

Let the brethren give their advice with all the deference required by humility, and not presume stubbornly to defend their opinions; but let the decision rather depend on the Abbot's judgment, and all submit to whatever he shall decide for their welfare.

However, just as it is proper for the disciples to obey their master, so also it is his function to dispose all things with prudence and justice.

In all things, therefore, let all follow the Rule as guide, and let no one be so rash as to deviate from it. Let no one in the monastery follow his own heart's fancy; and let no one presume to contend with his Abbot in an insolent way or even outside of the monastery. But if anyone should presume to do so, let him undergo the discipline of the Rule. At the same time, the Abbot himself should do all things in the fear of God and in observance of the Rule, knowing that beyond a doubt he will have to render an account of all his decisions to God, the most just Judge.

But if the business to be done in the interests of the monastery be of lesser importance, let him

take counsel with the seniors only. It is written, "Do everything with counsel, and you will not repent when you have done it."

7th day

Chapter 4

WHAT ARE THE INSTRUMENTS OF GOOD WORKS

1. In the first place, to love the Lord God with the whole heart, the whole soul, the whole strength.
2. Then, one's neighbor as oneself.
3. Then not to murder.
4. Not to commit adultery.
5. Not to steal.
6. Not to covet.
7. Not to bear false witness.
8. To respect all men.
9. And not to do to another what one would not have done to oneself.
10. To deny oneself in order to follow Christ.
11. To chastise the body.
12. Not to become attached to pleasures.
13. To love fasting.
14. To relieve the poor.
15. To clothe the naked.
16. To visit the sick.

17. To bury the dead.
18. To help in trouble.
19. To console the sorrowing.
20. To become a stranger to the world's ways.
21. To prefer nothing to the love of Christ.
22. Not to give way to anger.
23. Not to nurse a grudge.
24. Not to entertain deceit in one's heart.
25. Not to give a false peace.
26. Not to forsake charity.
27. Not to swear, for fear of perjuring oneself.
28. To utter truth from heart and mouth.
29. Not to return evil for evil.
30. To do no wrong to anyone, and to bear patiently wrongs done to oneself.
31. To love one's enemies.
32. Not to curse those who curse us, but rather to bless them.
33. To bear persecution for justice's sake.
34. Not to be proud.
35. Not addicted to wine.
36. Not a great eater.
37. Not drowsy.
38. Not lazy.
39. Not a grumbler.
40. Not a detractor.
41. To put one's hope in God.
42. To attribute to God, and not to self, whatever good one sees in oneself.

43. But to recognize always that the evil is one's own doing, and to impute it to oneself.

8th day

44. To fear the Day of Judgment.
45. To be in dread of hell.
46. To desire eternal life with all the passion of the spirit.
47. To keep death daily before one's eyes.
48. To keep constant guard over the actions of one's life.
49. To know for certain that God sees one everywhere.
50. When evil thoughts come into one's heart, to dash them against Christ immediately.
51. And to manifest them to one's spiritual father.
52. To guard one's tongue against evil and depraved speech.
53. Not to love much talking.
54. Not to speak useless words or words that move to laughter.
55. Not to love much or boisterous laughter.
56. To listen willingly to holy reading.
57. To devote oneself frequently to prayer.
58. Daily in one's prayers, with tears and sighs, to confess one's past sins to God, and to amend them for the future.

59. Not to fulfill the desires of the flesh; to hate one's own will.

60. To obey in all things the commands of the Abbot, even though he himself (which God forbid) should act otherwise, mindful of the Lord's precept, "Do what they say, but not what they do."

61. Not to wish to be called holy before one is holy; but first to be holy, that one may be truly so called.

62. To fulfill God's commandments daily in one's deeds.

63. To love chastity.

64. To hate no one.

65. Not to be jealous, not to harbor envy.

66. Not to love contention.

67. To beware of haughtiness.

68. And to respect the seniors.

69. To love the juniors.

70. To pray for one's enemies in the love of Christ.

71. To make peace with one's adversary before the sun sets.

72. And never to despair of God's mercy.

These, then, are the tools of the spiritual craft. If we employ them unceasingly day and night, and return them on the Day of Judgment, our compensation from the Lord will be that wage He has promised: "Eye has not seen, nor ear

heard, what God has prepared for those who love Him."

Now the workshop in which we shall diligently execute all these tasks is the enclosure of the monastery and stability in the community.

9th day

Chapter 5

ON OBEDIENCE

The first degree of humility is obedience without delay. This is the virtue of those who hold nothing dearer to them than Christ; who, because of the holy service they have professed, and the fear of hell, and the glory of life everlasting, as soon as anything has been ordered by the Superior, receive it as a divine command and cannot suffer any delay in executing it. Of these the Lord says, "As soon as he heard, he obeyed Me." And again to teachers He says, "He who hears you, hears Me."

Such as these, therefore, immediately leaving their own affairs and forsaking their own will, dropping the work they were engaged on and leaving it unfinished, with the ready step of obedience follow up with their deeds the voice of him who commands. And so as it were at the same moment the master's command is given and the disciple's work is completed, the two things

being speedily accomplished together in the swiftness of the fear of God by those who are moved with the desire of attaining life everlasting. That desire is their motive for choosing the narrow way, of which the Lord says, "Narrow is the way that leads to life," so that, not living according to their own choice nor obeying their own desires and pleasures but walking by another's judgment and command, they dwell in monasteries and desire to have an Abbot over them. Assuredly such as these are living up to that maxim of the Lord in which He says, "I have come not to do my own will, but the will of Him who sent me."

But this very obedience will be acceptable to God and pleasing to men only if what is commanded is done without hesitation, delay, lukewarmness, grumbling, or objection. For the obedience given to Superiors is given to God, since He Himself has said, "He who hears you, hears Me." And the disciples should offer their obedience with a good will, for "God loves a cheerful giver." For if the disciple obeys with an ill will and murmurs, not necessarily with his lips but simply in his heart, then even though he fulfill the command yet his work will not be acceptable to God, who sees that his heart is murmuring. And, far from gaining a reward for such work as this, he will incur the punishment due

to murmurers, unless he amend and make satisfaction.

10th day

Chapter 6

ON THE SPIRIT OF SILENCE

Let us do what the Prophet says: "I said, 'I will guard my ways, that I may not sin with my tongue. I have set a guard to my mouth.' I was mute and was humbled, and kept silence even from good things." Here the Prophet shows that if the spirit of silence ought to lead us at times to refrain even from good speech, so much the more ought the punishment for sin make us avoid evil words.

Therefore, since the spirit of silence is so important, permission to speak should rarely be granted even to perfect disciples, even though it be for good, holy, edifying conversation; for it is written, "In much speaking you will not escape sin," and in another place, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue."

For speaking and teaching belong to the master; the disciple's part is to be silent and to listen. And for that reason if anything has to be asked of the Superior, it should be asked with all the humility and submission inspired by reverence.

But as for coarse jests and idle words or words

that move to laughter, these we condemn everywhere with a perpetual ban, and for such conversation we do not permit a disciple to open his mouth.

11th day

Chapter 7

ON HUMILITY

Holy Scripture, brethren, cries out to us, saying, "Everyone who exalts himself shall be humbled, and he who humbles himself shall be exalted." In saying this it shows us that all exaltation is a kind of pride, against which the Prophet proves himself to be on guard when he says, "Lord, my heart is not exalted, nor are mine eyes lifted up; neither have I walked in great matters, nor in wonders above me." But how has he acted? "Rather have I been of humble mind than exalting myself; as a weaned child on its mother's breast, so You solace my soul."

Hence, brethren, if we wish to reach the very highest point of humility and to arrive speedily at that heavenly exaltation to which ascent is made through the humility of this present life, we must by our ascending actions erect the ladder Jacob saw in his dream, on which Angels appeared to him descending and ascending. By that descent and ascent we must surely under-

stand nothing else than this, that we descend by self-exaltation and ascend by humility. And the ladder thus set up is our life in the world, which the Lord raises up to heaven if our heart is humbled. For we call our body and soul the sides of the ladder, and into these sides our divine vocation has inserted the different steps of humility and discipline we must climb.

The first degree of humility, then, is that a person keep the fear of God before his eyes and beware of ever forgetting it. Let him be ever mindful of all that God has commanded; let his thoughts constantly recur to the hell-fire which will burn for their sins those who despise God, and to the life everlasting which is prepared for those who fear Him. Let him keep himself at every moment from sins and vices, whether of the mind, the tongue, the hands, the feet, or the self-will, and check also the desires of the flesh.

Let a man consider that God is always looking at him from heaven, that his actions are everywhere visible to the divine eyes and are constantly being reported to God by the Angels. This is what the Prophet shows us when he represents God as ever present within our thoughts, in the words "Searcher of minds and hearts is God" and again in the words "The Lord knows the thoughts of men." Again he says, "You have read

my thoughts from afar" and "The thoughts of men will confess to You."

In order that he may be careful about his wrongful thoughts, therefore, let the faithful brother say constantly in his heart, "Then shall I be spotless before Him, if I have kept myself from my iniquity."

As for self-will, we are forbidden to do our own will by the Scripture, which says to us, "Turn away from your own will," and likewise by the prayer in which we ask God that His will be done in us. And rightly are we taught not to do our own will when we take heed to the warning of Scripture: "There are ways which to men seem right, but the ends of them plunge into the depths of hell"; and also when we tremble at what is said of the careless: "They are corrupt and have become abominable in their wills."

And as for the desires of the flesh, let us believe with the Prophet that God is ever present to us, when he says to the Lord, "Every desire of mine is before You."

We must be on our guard, therefore, against evil desires, for death lies close by the gate of pleasure. Hence the Scripture gives this command: "Go not after your concupiscences."

So therefore, since the eyes of the Lord observe the good and the evil and the Lord is always looking down from heaven on the children of

men "to see if there by anyone who understands and seeks God," and since our deeds are daily, day and night, reported to the Lord by the Angels assigned to us, we must constantly beware, brethren, as the Prophet says in the Psalm, lest at any time God see us falling into evil ways and becoming unprofitable; and lest, having spared us for the present because in His kindness He awaits our reformation, He say to us in the future, "These things you did, and I held My peace."

12th day

The second degree of humility is that a person love not his own will nor take pleasure in satisfying his desires, but model his actions on the saying of the Lord, "I have come not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me." It is written also, "Self-will has its punishment, but constraint wins a crown."

The third degree of humility is that a person for love of God submit himself to his Superior in all obedience, imitating the Lord, of whom the Apostle says, "He became obedient even unto death."

The fourth degree of humility is that he hold fast to patience with a silent mind when in this

obedience he meets with difficulties and contradictions and even any kind of injustice, enduring all without growing weary or running away. For the Scripture says, "He who perseveres to the end, he it is who shall be saved"; and again, "Let your heart take courage, and wait for the Lord!"

And to show how those who are faithful ought to endure all things, however contrary, for the Lord, the Scripture says in the person of the suffering, "For Your sake we are put to death all the day long; we are considered as sheep marked for slaughter." Then, secure in their hope of a divine recompense, they go on with joy to declare, "But in all these trials we conquer, through Him who has granted us His love." Again, in another place the Scripture says, "You have tested us, O God; You have tried us as silver is tried, by fire; You have brought us into a snare; You have laid afflictions on our back." And to show that we ought to be under a Superior, it goes on to say, "You have set men over our heads."

Moreover, by their patience those faithful ones fulfil the Lord's command in adversities and injuries: when struck on one cheek, they offer the other; when deprived of their tunic, they surrender also their cloak; when forced to go a mile, they go two; with the Apostle Paul they

bear with false brethren and bless those who curse them.

13th day

The fifth degree of humility is that he hide from his Abbot none of the evil thoughts that enter his heart or the sins committed in secret, but that he humbly confess them. The Scripture urges us to this when it says, "Reveal your way to the Lord and hope in Him," and again, "Confess to the Lord, for He is good, for His mercy endures forever." And the Prophet likewise says, "My offense I have made known to You, and my iniquities I have not covered up. I said: 'I will declare against myself my iniquities to the Lord'; and 'You forgave the wickedness of my heart.' "

The sixth degree of humility is that a monk be content with the poorest and worst of everything, and that in every occupation assigned him he consider himself a bad and worthless workman, saying with the Prophet, "I am brought to nothing and I am without understanding; I have become as a beast of burden before You, and I am always with You."

The seventh degree of humility is that he consider himself lower and of less account than anyone else, and this not only in verbal protestation

but also with the most heartfelt inner conviction, humbling himself and saying with the Prophet, "But I am a worm and no man, the scorn of men and the outcast of the people. After being exalted, I have been humbled and covered with confusion." And again, "It is good for me that You have humbled me, that I may learn Your commandments."

14th day

The eighth degree of humility is that a monk do nothing except what is commended by the common Rule of the monastery and the example of the elders.

The ninth degree of humility is that a monk restrain his tongue and keep silence, not speaking until he is questioned. For the Scripture shows that "in much speaking there is no escape from sin" and that "the talkative man is not stable on the earth."

The tenth degree of humility is that he be not ready and quick to laugh, for it is written, "The fool lifts up his voice in laughter."

The eleventh degree of humility is that when a monk speaks he do so gently and without laughter, humbly and seriously, in few and sensible words, and that he be not noisy in his speech.

It is written, "A wise man is known by the fewness of his words."

The twelfth degree of humility is that a monk not only have humility in his heart but also by his very appearance make it always manifest to those who see him. That is to say whether he is at the Work of God, in the oratory, in the monastery, in the garden, on the road, in the fields or anywhere else, and whether sitting, walking or standing, he should always have his head bowed and his eyes toward the ground. Feeling the guilt of his sins at every moment, he should consider himself already present at the dread Judgment and constantly say in his heart what the publican in the Gospel said with his eyes fixed on the earth: "Lord, I am a sinner and not worthy to lift up my eyes to heaven"; and again with the Prophet: "I am bowed down and humbled everywhere."

Having climbed all these steps of humility, therefore, the monk will presently come to that perfect love of God which casts out fear. And all those precepts which formerly he had not observed without fear, he will now begin to keep by reason of that love, without any effort, as though naturally and by habit. No longer will his motive be the fear of hell, but rather the love of Christ, good habit and delight in the virtues

which the Lord will deign to show forth by the Holy Spirit in His servant now cleansed from vice and sin.

Chapters 8-18

ON THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE DIVINE OFFICE

15th day

Chapter 19

ON THE MANNER OF SAYING THE DIVINE OFFICE

We believe that the divine presence is everywhere and that "the eyes of the Lord are looking on the good and the evil in every place." But we should believe this especially without any doubt when we are assisting at the Work of God. To that end let us be mindful always of the Prophet's words, "Serve the Lord in fear" and again "Sing praises wisely" and "In the sight of the Angels I will sing praise to You." Let us therefore consider how we ought to conduct ourselves in the sight of the Godhead and of His Angels, and let us take part in the psalmody in such a way that our mind may be in harmony with our voice.

Chapter 20**ON REVERENCE IN PRAYER**

When we wish to suggest our wants to men of high station, we do not presume to do so except with humility and reverence. How much the more, then, are complete humility and pure devotion necessary in supplication of the Lord who is God of the universe! And let us be assured that it is not in saying a great deal that we shall be heard, but in purity of heart and in tears of compunction. Our prayer, therefore, ought to be short and pure, unless it happens to be prolonged by an inspiration of divine grace. In community, however, let prayer be very short, and when the Superior gives the signal let all rise together.

Chapter 21**ON THE DEANS OF THE MONASTERY****Chapter 22****HOW THE MONKS ARE TO SLEEP****Chapters 23-26****ON THE TREATMENT OF
DELINQUENT BRETHREN**

16th day

Chapter 27

HOW SOLICITOUS THE ABBOT SHOULD BE FOR THE EXCOMMUNICATED

Let the Abbot be most solicitous in his concern for delinquent brethren, for "it is not the healthy but the sick who need a physician." And therefore he ought to use every means that a wise physician would use. Let him send *senpectae*, that is, brethren of mature years and wisdom, who may as it were secretly console the wavering brother and induce him to make humble satisfaction; comforting him that he may not "be overwhelmed by excessive grief," but that, as the Apostle says, charity may be strengthened in him. And let everyone pray for him.

For the Abbot must have the utmost solicitude and exercise all prudence and diligence lest he lose any of the sheep entrusted to him. Let him know that what he has undertaken is the care of weak souls and not a tyranny over strong ones; and let him fear the Prophet's warning through which God says, "What you saw to be fat you took to yourselves, and what was feeble you cast away." Let him rather imitate the loving example of the Good Shepherd who left the ninety-nine sheep in the mountains and went to look

for the one sheep that had gone astray, on whose weakness He had such compassion that He deigned to place it on His own sacred shoulders and thus carry it back to the flock.

Chapter 28

ON THOSE WHO WILL NOT AMEND AFTER REPEATED CORRECTION

Chapter 29

WHETHER BRETHREN WHO LEAVE THE MONASTERY SHOULD BE RECEIVED AGAIN

Chapter 30

HOW BOYS ARE TO BE CORRECTED

17th day

Chapter 31

WHAT KIND OF MAN THE CELLARER OF THE MONASTERY SHOULD BE

As cellarer of the monastery let there be chosen from the community one who is wise, of mature character, sober, not a great eater, not haughty, not excitable, not offensive, not slow, not wasteful, but a God-fearing man who may be like a father to the whole community.

Let him have charge of everything. He shall do nothing without the Abbot's orders, but keep to his instructions. Let him not vex the brethren. If any brother happens to make some unreasonable demand of him, instead of vexing the brother with a contemptuous refusal he should humbly give the reason for denying the improper request.

Let him keep guard over his own soul, mindful always of the Apostle's saying that "he who has ministered well acquires for himself a good standing."

Let him take the greatest care of the sick, of children, of guests and of the poor, knowing without doubt that he will have to render an account for all these on the Day of Judgment.

Let him regard all the utensils of the monastery and its whole property as if they were the sacred vessels of the altar. Let him not think that he may neglect anything. He should be neither a miser nor a prodigal and squanderer of the monastery's substance, but should do all things with measure and in accordance with the Abbot's instructions.

Above all things let him have humility; and if he has nothing else to give let him give a good word in answer, for it is written, "A good word is above the best gift."

Let him have under his care all that the Abbot has assigned to him, but not presume to deal

with what he has forbidden him.

Let him give the brethren their appointed allowance of food without any arrogance or delay, that they may not be scandalized, mindful of the Word of God as to what he deserves "who shall scandalize one of the little ones."

If the community is a large one, let helpers be given him, that by their assistance he may fulfil with a quiet mind the office committed to him. The proper times should be observed in giving the things that have to be given and asking for the things that have to be asked for, that no one may be troubled or vexed in the house of God.

Chapter 32

ON THE TOOLS AND PROPERTY OF THE MONASTERY

18th day

Chapter 33

WHETHER MONKS OUGHT TO HAVE ANYTHING OF THEIR OWN

This vice especially is to be cut out of the monastery by the roots. Let no one presume to give or receive anything without the Abbot's leave, or

to have anything as his own—anything whatever, whether book or tablets or pen or whatever it may be—since they are not permitted to have even their bodies or wills at their own disposal; but for all their necessities let them look to the Father of the monastery. And let it be unlawful to have anything which the Abbot has not given or allowed. Let all things be common to all, as it is written, and let no one say or assume that anything is his own.

But if anyone is caught indulging in this most wicked vice, let him be admonished once and a second time. If he fails to amend, let him undergo punishment.

Chapter 34

WHETHER ALL SHOULD RECEIVE IN EQUAL MEASURE WHAT IS NECESSARY

Let us follow the Scripture, "Distribution was made to each according as anyone had need." By this we do not mean that there should be respecting of persons (which God forbid), but consideration for infirmities. He who needs less should thank God and not be discontented; but he who needs more should be humbled by the thought of his infirmity rather than feeling important on account of the kindness shown him. Thus all the members will be at peace.

Above all, let not the evil of murmuring appear for any reason whatsoever in the least word or sign. If anyone is caught at it, let him be placed under very severe discipline.

Chapter 35

ON THE WEEKLY SERVERS IN THE KITCHEN

19th day

Chapter 36

ON THE SICK BRETHREN

Before all things and above all things, care must be taken of the sick, so that they will be served as if they were Christ in person; for He Himself said, "I was sick, and you visited Me," and, "What you did for one of these least ones, you did for Me." But let the sick on their part consider that they are being served for the honor of God, and let them not annoy their brethren who are serving them by their unnecessary demands. Yet they should be patiently borne with, because from such as these is gained a more abundant reward. Therefore the Abbot shall take the greatest care that they suffer no neglect.

For these sick brethren let there be assigned a special room and an attendant who is God-fearing, diligent and solicitous. Let the use of baths be afforded the sick as often as may be expedient; but to the healthy, and especially to the young, let them be granted more rarely. Moreover, let the use of meat be granted to the sick who are very weak, for the restoration of their strength; but when they are convalescent, let all abstain from meat as usual.

The Abbot shall take the greatest care that the sick be not neglected by the cellarers or the attendants; for he also is responsible for what is done wrongly by his disciples.

Chapter 37

ON OLD MEN AND CHILDREN

Chapter 38

ON THE WEEKLY READER

Chapters 39-41

ON THE MEALS OF THE BRETHREN

Chapter 42

THAT NO ONE SPEAK AFTER COMPLINE

Chapters 43-46**HOW DELINQUENT BRETHREN ARE
TO MAKE SATISFACTION****Chapter 47****ON GIVING THE SIGNAL FOR THE
TIME OF THE WORK OF GOD****20th day****Chapter 48****ON THE DAILY MANUAL LABOR**

Idleness is the enemy of the soul. Therefore the brethren should be occupied at certain times in manual labor, and again at fixed hours in sacred reading. To that end we think that the times for each may be prescribed as follows.

From Easter until the Calends of October, when they come out from Prime in the morning let them labor at whatever is necessary until about the fourth hour, and from the fourth hour until about the sixth let them apply themselves to reading. After the sixth hour, having left the table, let them rest on their beds in perfect silence; or if anyone may perhaps want to read, let him read to himself in such a way as not to

disturb anyone else. Let None be said rather early, at the middle of the eighth hour, and let them again do what work has to be done until Vespers.

And if the circumstances of the place or their poverty should require that they themselves do the work of gathering the harvest, let them not be discontented; for then are they truly monks when they live by the labor of their hands, as did our Fathers and the Apostles. Let all things be done with moderation, however, for the sake of the faint-hearted.

From the Calends of October until the beginning of Lent, let them apply themselves to reading up to the end of the second hour. At the second hour let Terce be said, and then let all labor at the work assigned them until None. At the first signal for the Hour of None let everyone break off from his work, and hold himself ready for the sounding of the second signal. After the meal let them apply themselves to their reading or to the Psalms.

21st day

On the days of Lent, from morning until the end of the third hour let them apply themselves to their reading, and from then until the end of the tenth hour let them do the work assigned

them. And in these days of Lent they shall each receive a book from the library, which they shall read straight through from the beginning. These books are to be given out at the beginning of Lent.

But certainly one or two of the seniors should be deputed to go about the monastery at the hours when the brethren are occupied in reading and see that there be no lazy brother who spends his time in idleness or gossip and does not apply himself to the reading, so that he is not only unprofitable to himself but also distracts others. If such a one be found (which God forbid), let him be corrected once and a second time; if he does not amend, let him undergo the punishment of the Rule in such a way that the rest may take warning.

Moreover, one brother shall not associate with another at unseasonable hours.

On Sundays, let all occupy themselves in reading, except those who have been appointed to various duties. But if anyone should be so negligent and shiftless that he will not or cannot study or read, let him be given some work to do so that he will not be idle.

Weak or sickly brethren should be assigned a task or craft of such a nature as to keep them from idleness and at the same time not to overburden them or drive them away with excessive

toil. Their weakness must be taken into consideration by the Abbot.

22nd day

Chapter 49

ON THE OBSERVANCE OF LENT

Although the life of a monk ought to have about it at all times the character of a Lenten observance, yet since few have the virtue for that, we therefore urge that during the actual days of Lent the brethren keep their lives most pure and at the same time wash away during these holy days all the negligences of other times. And this will be worthily done if we restrain ourselves from all vices and give ourselves up to prayer with tears, to reading, to compunction of heart and to obedience.

During these days, therefore, let us increase somewhat the usual burden of our service, as by private prayers and by abstinence in food and drink. Thus everyone of his own will may offer God "with joy of the Holy Spirit" something above the measure required of him. From his body, that is, he may withhold some food, drink, sleep, talking and jesting; and with the joy of spiritual desire he may look forward to holy Easter.

Let each one, however, suggest to his Abbot what it is that he wants to offer, and let it be done with his blessing and approval. For anything done without the permission of the spiritual father will be imputed to presumption and vainglory and will merit no reward. Therefore let everything be done with the Abbot's approval.

Chapters 50-51

ON BRETHREN WHO ARE AWAY FROM THE MONASTERY

23rd day

Chapter 52

ON THE ORATORY OF THE MONASTERY

Let the oratory be what it is called, a place of prayer; and let nothing else be done there or kept there. When the Work of God is ended, let all go out in perfect silence, and let reverence for God be observed, so that any brother who may wish to pray privately will not be hindered by another's misconduct. And at other times also, if anyone should want to pray by himself, let him go in simply and pray, not in a loud voice but with tears and fervor of heart. He who does

not say his prayers in this way, therefore, shall not be permitted to remain in the oratory when the Work of God is ended, lest another be hindered, as we have said.

24th day

Chapter 53

ON THE RECEPTION OF GUESTS

Let all guests who arrive be received like Christ, for He is going to say, "I came as a guest, and you received Me." And to all let due honor be shown, especially to the domestics of the faith and to pilgrims.

As soon as a guest is announced, therefore, let the Superior or the brethren meet him with all charitable service. And first of all let them pray together, and then exchange the kiss of peace. For the kiss of peace should not be offered until after the prayers have been said, on account of the devil's deceptions.

In the salutation of all guests, whether arriving or departing, let all humility be shown. Let the head be bowed or the whole body prostrated on the ground in adoration of Christ, who indeed is received in their persons.

After the guests have been received and taken to prayer, let the Superior or someone appointed

by him sit with them. Let the divine law be read before the guest for his edification, and then let all kindness be shown him. The Superior shall break his fast for the sake of a guest, unless it happens to be a principal fast day which may not be violated. The brethren, however, shall observe the customary fasts. Let the Abbot give the guests water for their hands; and let both Abbot and community wash the feet of all guests. After the washing of the feet let them say this verse: "We have received Your mercy, O God, in the midst of Your temple."

In the reception of the poor and of pilgrims the greatest care and solicitude should be shown, because it is especially in them that Christ is received; for as far as the rich are concerned, the very fear which they inspire wins respect for them. . . .

Chapter 54

WHETHER A MONK SHOULD RECEIVE LETTERS OR ANYTHING ELSE

Chapter 55

ON THE CLOTHES AND SHOES OF THE BRETHREN

Chapter 56**ON THE ABBOT'S TABLE****25th day****Chapter 57****ON THE CRAFTSMEN OF
THE MONASTERY**

If there are craftsmen in the monastery, let them practice their crafts with all humility, provided the Abbot has given permission. But if any one of them becomes conceited over his skill in his craft, because he seems to be conferring a benefit on the monastery, let him be taken from his craft and no longer exercise it unless, after he has humbled himself, the Abbot again gives him permission.

If any of the work of the craftsmen is to be sold, let those through whose hands the transactions pass see to it that they do not presume to practice any fraud. Let them always remember Ananias and Saphira, lest perhaps the death which these incurred in the body, they themselves and any others who would deal dishonestly with the monastery's property should suffer in the soul. And in the prices let not the sin of avarice creep in, but let the goods always be sold a little cheaper than they can be sold by

people in the world, "that in all things God may be glorified."

26th day

Chapter 58

ON THE MANNER OF RECEIVING BRETHREN

When anyone is newly come for the reformation of his life, let him not be granted an easy entrance; but, as the Apostle says, "Test the spirits to see whether they are from God." If the newcomer, therefore, perseveres in his knocking, and if it is seen after four or five days that he bears patiently the harsh treatment offered him and the difficulty of admission, and that he persists in his petition, then let entrance be granted him, and let him stay in the guest house for a few days.

After that let him live in the novitiate, where the novices study, eat and sleep. A senior shall be assigned to them who is skilled in winning souls, to watch over them with the utmost care. Let him examine whether the novice is truly seeking God, and whether he is zealous for the Work of God, for obedience and for humiliations. Let the novice be told all the hard and

rugged ways by which the journey to God is made.

If he promises stability and perseverance, then at the end of two months let this Rule be read through to him, and let him be addressed thus: "Here is the law under which you wish to fight. If you can observe it, enter; if you cannot, you are free to depart." If he still stands firm, let him be taken to the above-mentioned novitiate and again tested in all patience. And after the lapse of six months let the Rule be read to him, that he may know on what he is entering. And if he still remains firm, after four months let the same Rule be read to him again.

Then, having deliberated with himself, if he promises to keep it in its entirety and to observe everything that is commanded him, let him be received into the community. But let him understand that, according to the law of the Rule, from that day forward he may not leave the monastery nor withdraw his neck from under the yoke of the Rule which he was free to refuse or to accept during that prolonged deliberation.

He who is to be received shall make a promise before all in the oratory of his stability and of the reformation of his life and of obedience. This promise he shall make before God and His Saints, so that if he should ever act otherwise, he may know that he will be condemned by Him

whom he mocks. Of this promise of his let him draw up a petition in the name of the Saints whose relics are there and of the Abbot who is present. Let him write this petition with his own hand; or if he is illiterate, let another write it at his request, and let the novice put his mark to it. Then let him place it with his own hand upon the altar; and when he has placed it there, let the novice at once intone this verse: "Receive me, O Lord, according to Your word, and I shall live: and let me not be confounded in my hope." Let the whole community answer this verse three times and add the "Glory be to the Father." Then let the novice brother prostrate himself at each one's feet, that they may pray for him. And from that day forward let him be counted as one of the community. . . .

Chapter 59

ON THE SONS OF NOBLES AND OF THE POOR WHO ARE OFFERED

Chapter 60

ON PRIESTS WHO MAY WISH TO LIVE IN THE MONASTERY

Chapter 61

HOW PILGRIM MONKS ARE TO BE RECEIVED

27th day

Chapter 62

ON THE PRIESTS OF THE MONASTERY

If an Abbot desire to have a priest or a deacon ordained for his monastery, let him choose one of his monks who is worthy to exercise the priestly office.

But let the one who is ordained beware of self-exaltation or pride; and let him not presume to do anything except what is commanded him by the Abbot, knowing that he is so much the more subject to the discipline of the Rule. Nor should he by reason of his priesthood forget the obedience and the discipline required by the Rule, but make ever more and more progress towards God.

Let him always keep the place which he received on entering the monastery, except in his duties at the altar or in case the choice of the community and the will of the Abbot should promote him for the worthiness of his life. Yet he must understand that he is to observe the rules laid down by deans and Priors. . . .

Chapter 63**ON THE ORDER OF THE COMMUNITY****Chapter 64****ON CONSTITUTING AN ABBOT****Chapter 65****ON THE PRIOR OF THE MONASTERY****Chapter 66****ON THE PORTERS OF THE MONASTERY****Chapter 67****ON BRETHREN WHO ARE SENT****ON A JOURNEY****28th day****Chapter 68****IF A BROTHER BE COMMANDED TO****DO IMPOSSIBLE THINGS**

If it happens that difficult or impossible tasks are laid on a brother, let him nevertheless receive the order of the one in authority with all meekness and obedience. But if he sees that the weight of the burden altogether exceeds the limit of his

strength, let him submit the reasons for his inability to the one who is over him in a quiet way and at an opportune time, without pride, resistance, or contradiction. And if after these representations the Superior still persists in his decision and command, let the subject know that this is for his good, and let him obey out of love, trusting in the help of God.

Chapter 69

THAT THE MONKS PRESUME NOT TO DEFEND ONE ANOTHER

Chapter 70

THAT NO ONE VENTURE TO PUNISH AT RANDOM

29th day

Chapter 71

THAT THE BRETHREN BE OBEDIENT TO ONE ANOTHER

Not only is the boon of obedience to be shown by all to the Abbot, but the brethren are also to obey one another, knowing that by this road of obedience they are going to God. Giving

priority, therefore, to the commands of the Abbot and of the Superiors appointed by him (to which we allow no private orders to be preferred), for the rest let all the juniors obey their seniors with all charity and solicitude. But if anyone is found contentious, let him be corrected.

And if any brother, for however small a cause, is corrected in any way by the Abbot or by any of his Superiors, or if he faintly perceives that the mind of any Superior is angered or moved against him, however little, let him at once, without delay, prostrate himself on the ground at his feet and lie there making satisfaction until that emotion is quieted with a blessing. But if anyone should disdain to do this, let him undergo corporal punishment or, if he is stubborn, let him be expelled from the monastery.

30th day

Chapter 72

ON THE GOOD ZEAL WHICH MONKS OUGHT TO HAVE

Just as there is an evil zeal of bitterness which separates from God and leads to hell, so there is a good zeal which separates from vices and leads to God and to life everlasting. This zeal, therefore, the monks should practice with the

most fervent love. Thus they should anticipate one another in honor; most patiently endure one another's infirmities, whether of body or of character; vie in paying obedience one to another—no one following what he considers useful for himself, but rather what benefits another; tender the charity of brotherhood chastely; fear God in love; love their Abbot with a sincere and humble charity; prefer nothing whatever to Christ. And may He bring us all together to life everlasting!

31st day

Chapter 73

ON THE FACT THAT THE FULL OBSERVANCE OF JUSTICE IS NOT ESTABLISHED IN THIS RULE

Now we have written this Rule in order that by its observance in monasteries we may show that we have attained some degree of virtue and the rudiments of the religious life.

But for him who would hasten to the perfection of that life there are the teachings of the holy Fathers, the observance of which leads a man to the height of perfection. For what page or what utterance of the divinely inspired books

of the Old and New Testaments is not a most unerring rule for human life? Or what book of the holy Catholic Fathers does not loudly proclaim how we may come by a straight course to our Creator? Then the Conferences and the Institutes and the Lives of the Fathers, as also the Rule of our holy Father Basil—what else are they but tools of virtue for right-living and obedient monks? But for us who are lazy and ill-living and negligent they are a source of shame and confusion.

Whoever you are, therefore, who are hastening to the heavenly homeland, fulfill with the help of Christ this minimum Rule which we have written for beginners; and then at length under God's protection you will attain to the loftier heights of doctrine and virtue which we have mentioned above.

PART TWO

THE DIVINE OFFICE AND SPECIAL PRAYERS

St. Benedict tells us in his Rule (Chapter 40) that it is "with some misgivings that we regulate the measure of other men's sustenance." In a similar manner, it is difficult to select from among the many beautiful parts of the Divine Office those portions which all Oblates might be encouraged to say. However, some selection has been necessary.

Since a majority of Oblates seem to prefer a morning and an evening prayer, we here present the complete text of the Hour of Prime, the official morning prayer of the Church, and of the Hour of Compline, the Church's evening prayer. It was decided to add the text of Sunday Vespers as well, for Sunday should be a day of special prayer and devotion for us, and a text for Vespers may be desirable for certain occasions. Sunday Vespers may be recited on other days also.

In the words of the Declaration to Statute 24, the recitation of the Divine Office is "the ideal way for the Oblate to participate in the prayers of his abbey." However, recitation of the Office is not absolutely obligatory, and one commits no sin if he fails to recite it. If it is impossible to recite both Prime and Compline each day, the Oblate should try to say one or the other. Failing a regular daily recitation of the Office, Oblates should try to recite one or more of the Hours whenever circumstances permit. Those who wish to say more of the Office than is provided here are referred to one of the Breviary publications mentioned in the Reading List on page 202.

OFFICE FOR OBLATES

Prayer before the Office

Open, O Lord, my mouth that I may praise your holy Name; cleanse my heart from all vain, perverse and distracting thoughts; enlighten my mind and inflame my heart, so that I may pray this Office worthily, attentively and devoutly, and that I may deserve to be heard in the presence of your divine Majesty. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

O Lord, in union with that divine intention

with which you, while on earth, did yourself praise God, I offer to you this hour.

Prayer after the Office

To the most holy and undivided Trinity, to the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ crucified, to the fruitful virginity of the most glorious Mary ever Virgin, and to the company of all the Saints, may eternal praise, honor, power and glory be given by every creature, and to us the remission of all our sins. Amen.

V. Blessed be the womb of the Virgin Mary, which bore the Son of the Eternal Father.

R. And blessed be the breasts which gave sustenance to Christ our Lord.

Our Father. Hail Mary.

PRIME

Our Father. Hail Mary. I believe in God.)

V. O God, come to my assistance.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me. * Glory
be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy
Ghost. * As it was in the beginning, is now and
ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia.
(From Septuagesima to Easter, instead of Alleluia
is said: Praise be to you, O Lord, King of eternal
glory.)

Hymn

The morning sun has risen now.
Come, let us turn to God in prayer
And beg him shield our souls from harm
Each hour, each moment, everywhere.

May healing grace restrain our tongues
From words of bitterness and strife,
God's loving care protect our sight
From what could rob the soul of life.

May guilt not soil the inmost heart,
Or wickedness gain entrance there.
To keep the stubborn flesh subdued
Let thirst and fasting be our share.

Thus, when the present day is done
And nightfall comes, God grant that we,
Still persevering in his grace,
May sing his praises worthily.

Praise God the Father, praise his name!
 Before his Son bow down, adore!
 Give glory to the Paraclete!
 One Godhead, blest forevermore! Amen.

The following psalms are said at Prime on SUNDAY only. For the rest of the week the arrangement is as follows:

MONDAY	page 95
TUESDAY	page 99
WEDNESDAY	page 103
THURSDAY	page 107
FRIDAY	page 110
SATURDAY	page 115

Antiphon: Throughout the year: Alleluia.

During Septuagesima and Lent: Happy are they.

Psalm 118—I

Praise of God's Law

Happy are they whose way is blameless, * who walk in the law of the LORD.

Happy are they who observe his decrees, * who seek him with all their heart,

And do no wrong, * but walk in his ways.

You have commanded that your precepts * be diligently kept.

Oh, that I might be firm in the ways * of keeping your statutes!

Then should I not be put to shame * when I beheld all your commands.

I will give you thanks with an upright heart, * when I have learned your just ordinances.

I will keep your statutes; * do not utterly forsake me.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son * and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, * world without end. Amen.

This doxology Glory be to the Father is said at the end of each psalm unless otherwise indicated.

Psalm 118-II

How shall a young man be faultless in his way? * By keeping to your words.

With all my heart I seek you; * let me not stray from your commands.

Within my heart I treasure your promise, * that I may not sin against you.

Blessed are you, O LORD; * teach me your statutes.

With my lips I declare * all the ordinances of your mouth.

In the way of your decrees I rejoice, * as much as in all riches.

I will meditate on your precepts, * and consider your ways.

In your statutes I will delight; * I will not forget your words.

Psalm 118-III

Be good to your servant, that I may live * and keep your words.

Open my eyes, that I may consider * the wonders of your law.

I am a wayfarer of earth; * hide not your commands from me.

My soul is consumed with longing * for your ordinances at all times.

You rebuke the accursed proud, * who turn away from your commands.

Take away from me reproach and contempt, * for I observe your decrees.

Though princes meet and talk against me, * your servant meditates on your statutes.

Yes, your decrees are my delight; * they are my counselors.

Psalm 118-IV

I lie prostrate in the dust; * give me life according to your word.

I declared my ways, and you answered me; * teach me your statutes.

Make me understand the way of your precepts, * and I will meditate on your wondrous deeds.

My soul weeps for sorrow; * strengthen me according to your words.

Remove from me the way of falsehood, * and favor me with your law.

The way of truth I have chosen; * I have set your ordinances before me.

I cling to your decrees; * O LORD, let me not be put to shame.

I will run the way of your commands * when you give me a docile heart.

Antiphon: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia. (In Paschaltime add a fourth Alleluia.)

During Septuagesima and Lent: Happy are they who seek God with all their heart.

Chapter

To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

On weekdays the following Chapter is said in place of the one above:

Love truth and peace, says the Lord Almighty.

R^v. Thanks be to God.

V. Arise, O Christ, and help us. (P.T. Alleluia.)

R. And deliver us for your Name's sake. (*P.T.*
Alleluia.)

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on
us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father. . . .

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

I believe in God. . . .

V. The resurrection of the body.

R. And life everlasting. Amen.

V. Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

R. Who made heaven and earth.

I confess to Almighty God, / to Blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, / to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, / to our holy Father Benedict, and to all the Saints, / that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed: / through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. / Therefore I pray Blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, / blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, / our holy Father Benedict, and all the Saints / to pray to the Lord our God for me.

May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins and bring us to life everlasting.

R. Amen.

May the Almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution and remission of our sins.

R. Amen.

V. Vouchsafe, O Lord, this day

R. To keep us from sin.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

Let us pray

Lord God Almighty, you have brought us to the beginning of this day. Protect us by your power! Grant that during this day we may not fall into sin, but let our thoughts, words, and actions be directed to doing your holy will. Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who is living and reigning with you in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, forever and ever.

R. Amen.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

V. Let us bless the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

That part of the HOLY RULE (see page 29 ff.) assigned for the day may here be read by the Oblate and reflected upon briefly. The following is then said:

V. Precious in the sight of the Lord.

R. Is the death of His faithful ones.

May holy Mary and all the Saints plead for us with the Lord, that we may be helped and

saved by Him who lives and reigns forever and ever.

R. Amen.

V. O God, come to my assistance.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me.

This versicle and response is repeated THREE times, and then is added:

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; / as it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father. . . .

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Look down upon your servants, O Lord, and upon the works of your hands, and direct their children.

R. And let the glorious beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and do you direct the work of our hands; yes, the work of our hands do you direct. Glory be to the Father. . . .

Let us pray

O Lord God, King of heaven and earth, may it please you this day to direct and sanctify, to rule and govern our hearts and bodies, our thoughts, words, and deeds according to your law

and in the doing of your commandments. Now and forever may we by your help attain salvation and freedom, O Savior of the world, who lives and reigns forever and ever.

R. Amen.

V. Pray, lord, a blessing.

May the Lord Almighty order our days and deeds in His peace.

R. Amen.

May the Lord direct our hearts and bodies in the love of God and the patience of Christ.

R. Thanks be to God.

V. Our help is in the Name of the Lord.

R. Who made heaven and earth.

May the Lord bless us and defend us from all evil, and bring us to life everlasting. And may the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

R. Amen.

Let us make a remembrance of all our departed brethren, friends and benefactors.

V. May they rest in peace.

R. Amen.

Psalm 129 Prayer for Pardon and Mercy

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD: *
Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive * to my voice in supplication:

If you, O LORD, mark iniquities, * Lord, who can stand?

But with you is forgiveness, * that you may be revered.

I trust in the LORD; * my soul trusts in his word.

My soul waits for the LORD * more than sentinels wait for the dawn.

More than sentinels wait for the dawn, * let Israel wait for the LORD,

For with the LORD is kindness * and with him is plenteous redemption;

And he will redeem Israel * from all their iniquities.

Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord: * and let perpetual light shine upon them.

V. From the gate of hell

R. Deliver their souls, O Lord.

V. May they rest in peace.

R. Amen.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

Let us pray

O God, you grant forgiveness for sin and desire the salvation of mankind. We beseech you to grant in your mercy that the brethren, relatives and benefactors of our congregation who have departed this world may partake of everlasting

bliss through the intercession of Blessed Mary ever Virgin and of all your saints. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who is living and reigning with you in the unity of the Holy Ghost, one God, forever and ever.

R. Amen.

V. Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord.

R. And let perpetual light shine upon them.

V. May they rest in peace.

R. Amen.

Our Father....

The antiphon of the Blessed Virgin is said according to the season, together with its versicle, response and oration (see page 138 ff.). After the antiphon, the following is said:

V. May the divine assistance remain always with us.

R. And with our absent brethren. Amen.

The prayer after Office is given on page 84.

MONDAY PRIME

The introductory prayer and hymn are given on page 85.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: Serve the Lord.

During Lent: I live.

Passion Week: Deliver me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia.

Psalm 1

True Happiness

Happy the man who follows not * the counsel
of the wicked

Nor walks in the way of sinners, * nor sits in
the company of the insolent,

But delights in the law of the LORD * and
meditates on his law day and night.

He is like a tree planted near running water, *
that yields its fruit in due season,

And whose leaves never fade. * Whatever he
does, prospers.

Not so the wicked, not so; * they are like chaff
which the wind drives away.

Therefore in judgment the wicked shall not
stand, * nor shall sinners, in the assembly of the
just.

For the LORD watches over the way of the
just, * but the way of the wicked vanishes.

Glory be to the Father. . . .

As it was in the beginning. . . .

Psalm 2 The Universal Reign of the Messias

Why do the nations rage * and the peoples
utter folly?

The kings of the earth rise up, and the princes
conspire together * against the LORD and
against his anointed:

"Let us break their fetters * and cast their
bonds from us!"

He who is throned in heaven laughs; * the LORD derides them.

Then in anger he speaks to them; * he terrifies them in his wrath:

"I myself have set up my king on Sion, my holy mountain." * I will proclaim the decree of the LORD:

The LORD said to me, "You are my son; * this day I have begotten you.

Ask of me and I will give you the nations for an inheritance * and the ends of the earth for your possession.

You shall rule them with an iron rod; * you shall shatter them like an earthen dish."

And now, O kings, give heed; * take warning, you rulers of the earth.

Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice before him; * with trembling pay homage to him,

Lest he be angry and you perish from the way, when his anger blazes suddenly. * Happy are all who take refuge in him!

Psalm 6

Prayer in Time of Distress

O LORD, reprove me not in your anger, * nor chastise me in your wrath.

Have pity on me, O LORD, for I am languishing; * heal me, O LORD, for my body is in terror;

My soul, too, is utterly terrified; * but you, O LORD, how long . . .?

Return, O LORD, save my life; * rescue me because of your kindness,

For among the dead no one remembers you; * in the nether world who gives you thanks?

I am wearied with sighing; every night I flood my bed with weeping; * I drench my couch with my tears.

My eyes are dimmed with sorrow; * they have aged because of all my foes.

Depart from me, all evildoers, * for the LORD has heard the sound of my weeping;

The LORD has heard my plea; * the LORD has accepted my prayer.

All my enemies shall be put to shame in utter terror; * they shall fall back in sudden shame.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice before him with trembling.

During Lent: I live, says the Lord. I do not desire the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live.

Passion Week: Deliver me, Lord, and set me beside you; then let any hand fight against me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, allel.

Continue with "Love truth and peace . . ." on page 89.

TUESDAY PRIME

The introductory prayer and hymn are given on page 85.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: God is a just Judge.

During Lent: I live.

Passion Week: Deliver me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia.

Psalm 7 An Appeal to the Divine Judge

O LORD, my God, in you I take refuge; *
save me from all my pursuers and rescue me,

Lest I become like the lion's prey, * to be torn
to pieces, with no one to rescue me.

O LORD, my God, if I am at fault in this, *
if there is guilt on my hands,

If I have repaid my friend with evil, * I who
spared those who without cause were my foes—

Let the enemy pursue and overtake me; let
him trample my life to the ground, * and lay my
glory in the dust.

Rise up, O LORD, in your anger; rise against
the fury of my foes; * wake to the judgment you
have decreed.

Let the assembly of the peoples surround you;
above them on high be enthroned. * The LORD
judges the nations.

Do me justice, O LORD, because I am just, *
and because of the innocence that is mine.

Let the malice of the wicked come to an end,
but sustain the just, * O searcher of heart and
soul, O just God.

A shield before me is God, * who saves the
upright of heart;

A just judge is God, * a God who punishes
day by day.

Unless they be converted, God will sharpen his
sword; * he will bend and aim his bow,

Prepare his deadly weapons against them, *
and use fiery darts for arrows.

He who conceived iniquity and was pregnant
with mischief, * brings forth failure.

He has opened a hole, he has dug it deep, *
but he falls into the pit which he has made.

His mischief shall recoil upon his own head; *
upon the crown of his head his violence shall re-
bound.

I will give thanks to the LORD for his jus-
tice, * and sing praise to the name of the LORD
Most High.

Psalm 8

The Majesty of God and
the Dignity of Man

O LORD, our Lord, how glorious is your
name over all the earth! * You have exalted your
majesty above the heavens.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings you
have fashioned praise because of your foes, * to

silence the hostile and the vengeful.

When I behold your heavens, the work of your fingers, * the moon and the stars which you set in place—

What is man that you should be mindful of him, * or the son of man that you should care for him?

You have made him little less than the angels, * and crowned him with glory and honor.

You have given him rule over the works of your hands, * putting all things under his feet:

All sheep and oxen, * yes, and the beasts of the field,

The birds of the air, the fishes of the sea, * and whatever swims the paths of the seas.

O LORD, our Lord, * how glorious is your name over all the earth!

Psalm 9—I Thanksgiving for the Overthrow
of Hostile Nations

I will give thanks to you, O LORD, with all my heart; * I will declare all your wondrous deeds.

I will be glad and exult in you; * I will sing praise to your name, Most High,

Because my enemies are turned back, * overthrow and destroyed before you.

For you upheld my right and my cause, * seated on your throne, judging justly.

You rebuked the nations and destroyed the wicked; * their name you blotted out forever and ever.

The enemies are ruined completely forever; * the remembrance of the cities you uprooted has perished.

But the LORD sits enthroned forever; * he has set up his throne for judgment.

He judges the world with justice; * he governs the peoples with equity.

The LORD is a stronghold for the oppressed, * a stronghold in times of distress.

They trust in you who cherish your name, * for you foresake not those who seek you, O LORD.

Sing praise to the LORD enthroned in Sion; * proclaim among the nations his deeds;

For the avenger of blood has remembered; * he has not forgotten the cry of the afflicted.

Have pity on me, O LORD; see how I am afflicted by my foes, * you who have raised me up from the gates of death,

That I may declare all your praises * and, in the gates of the daughter of Sion, rejoice in your salvation.

The nations are sunk in the pit they have made; * in the snare they set, their foot is caught;

In passing sentence, the LORD is manifest; *

the wicked are trapped by the work of their own hands.

To the nether world the wicked shall turn back, * all the nations that forget God.

For the needy shall not always be forgotten, * nor shall the hope of the afflicted forever perish.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: God is a just Judge, strong and patient. Shall he be angered every day?

During Lent: I live, says the Lord. I do not desire the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live.

Passion Week: Deliver me, Lord, and set me beside you; then let any hand fight against me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Continue with "Love truth and peace . . ." on page 89 ff.

WEDNESDAY PRIME

The introductory prayer and hymn are given on page 85.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: Rise, O Lord.

During Lent: I live.

Passion Week: Deliver me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia.

Psalm 9-II Prayer for Help against Oppressors

Rise, O LORD, let not man prevail; * let the nations be judged in your presence.

Strike them with terror, O LORD; * let the nations know that they are but men.

Why, O LORD, do you stand aloof? * Why hide in times of distress?

Proudly the wicked harass the afflicted, * who are caught in the devices the wicked have contrived.

For the wicked man glories in his greed, * and the covetous blasphemers, sets the LORD at naught.

The wicked man boasts, "He will not avenge it"; * "There is no God," sums up his thoughts.

His ways are secure at all times; your judgments are far from his mind; * all his foes he scorns.

He says in his heart, "I shall not be disturbed; * from age to age I shall be without misfortune."

His mouth is full of cursing, guile and deceit; * under his tongue are mischief and iniquity.

He lurks in ambush near the villages; in hiding he murders the innocent; * his eyes spy upon the unfortunate.

He waits in secret like a lion in his lair; he lies in wait to catch the afflicted; * he catches the afflicted and drags them off in his net.

He stoops and lies prone * till by his violence
fall the unfortunate.

He says in his heart, "God has forgotten; * he
hides his face, he never sees."

Rise, O LORD! O God, lift up your hand! *
Forget not the afflicted!

Why should the wicked man despise God, *
saying in his heart, "He will not avenge it"?

You do see, for you behold misery and sorrow,
* taking them in your hands.

On you the unfortunate man depends; * of
the fatherless you are the helper.

Break the strength of the wicked and of the
evildoer; * punish their wickedness; let them not
survive.

The LORD is king forever and ever; * the
nations have perished out of his land.

The desire of the afflicted you hear, O LORD;
* strengthening their hearts, you pay heed

To the defense of the fatherless and the op-
pressed, * that man, who is of earth, may terrify
no more.

Psalm 10 Unshaken Confidence in God

In the LORD I take refuge; how can you say
to me, * "Flee to the mountain like a bird!"

For, see, the wicked bend the bow; they place
the arrow on the string * to shoot in the dark at
the upright of heart.

When the pillars are overthrown, * what can the just man do?"

The LORD is in his holy temple; * the LORD'S throne is in heaven.

His eyes behold, * his searching glance is on mankind.

The LORD searches the just and the wicked;
* the lover of violence he hates.

He rains upon the wicked fiery coals and brimstone; * a burning blast is their allotted cup.

For the LORD is just, he loves just deeds; * the upright shall see his face.

Psalm 11 Prayer against Evil Tongues

Help, O LORD! for no one now is dutiful; *
faithfulness has vanished from among men.

Everyone speaks falsehood to his neighbor; *
with smooth lips they speak, and double heart.

May the LORD destroy all smooth lips, * ev-
ery boastful tongue,

Those who say, "We are heroes with our
tongues; * our lips are our own; who is lord
over us?"

"Because they rob the afflicted, and the needy
sigh, * now will I arise," says the LORD;

"I will grant safety * to him who longs for it."

The promises of the LORD are sure, * like
tried silver, freed from dross, sevenfold refined.

You, O LORD, will keep us * and preserve us always from this generation,

While about us the wicked strut * and in high place are the basest of men.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: Rise, O Lord, let not man prevail.

During Lent: I live, says the Lord. I do not desire the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live.

Passion Week: Deliver me, Lord, and set me beside you; then let any hand fight against me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Continue with "Love truth and peace . . ." on page 89 ff.

THURSDAY PRIME

The introductory prayer and hymn are given on page 85.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: I will sing to the Lord.

During Lent: I live.

Passion Week: Deliver me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia.

Psalm 12

Prayer of One in Sorrow

How long, O LORD? Will you utterly forget me? * How long will you hide your face from me?

How long shall I harbor sorrow in my soul, * grief in my heart day after day?

How long will my enemy triumph over me? * Look, answer me, O LORD, my God!

Give light to my eyes that I may not sleep in death * lest my enemy say, "I have overcome him";

Lest my foes rejoice at my downfall * though I trusted in your kindness.

Let my heart rejoice in your salvation; * let me sing of the LORD, "He has been good to me."

Psalm 13

A Lament over Widespread
Corruption

The fool says in his heart, * "There is no God."

Such are corrupt; they do abominable deeds; * there is not one who does good.

The LORD looks down from heaven upon the children of men, * to see if there be one who is wise and seeks God.

All alike have gone astray; they have become perverse; * there is not one who does good, not even one.

Will all these evildoers never learn, * they
who eat up my people just as they eat bread?

They have not called upon the LORD; then
they shall be in great fear, * for God is with the
just generation.

You would confound the plans of the afflicted,
* but the LORD is his refuge.

Oh, that out of Sion would come the salvation
of Israel! When the LORD restores the well-
being of his people, * then shall Jacob exult and
Israel be glad.

Psalm 14

The Guest of God

O LORD, who shall sojourn in your tent? *
Who shall dwell on your holy mountain?

He who walks blamelessly and does justice;
who thinks the truth in his heart * and slanders
not with his tongue;

Who harms not his fellow man, * nor takes
up a reproach against his neighbor;

By whom the reprobate is despised, * while he
honors those who fear the LORD;

Who, though it be to his loss, changes not his
pledged word; who lends not his money at usury
* and accepts no bribe against the innocent.

He who does these things * shall never be dis-
turbed.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: I will sing to the Lord who has given me good things.

During Lent: I live, says the Lord. I do not desire the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live.

Passion Week: Deliver me, Lord, and set me beside you; then let any hand fight against me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Continue with "Love truth and peace . . ." on page 89 ff.

FRIDAY PRIME

The introductory prayer and hymn are given on page 85.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: Of my goods.

During Lent: I live.

Passion Week: Deliver me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia.

Psalm 15

God the Supreme Good

Keep me, O God, for in you I take refuge; I say to the LORD, "My Lord are you. * Apart from you I have no good."

How wonderfully has he made me cherish *
the holy ones who are in his land!

They multiply their sorrows * who court other
gods.

Blood libations to them I will not pour out, *
nor will I take their names upon my lips.

O LORD, my allotted portion and my cup, *
you it is who hold fast my lot.

For me the measuring lines have fallen on
pleasant sites; * fair to me indeed is my inheri-
tance.

I bless the LORD who counsels me; * even in
the night my heart exhorts me.

I set the LORD ever before me; * with him at
my right hand I shall not be disturbed.

Therefore my heart is glad and my soul re-
joices, * my body, too, abides in confidence;

Because you will not abandon my soul to the
nether world, * nor will you suffer your faithful
one to undergo corruption.

You will show me the path to life, fullness of
joys in your presence, * the delights at your
right hand forever.

Psalm 16

Prayer against Persecutors

Hear, O LORD, a just suit; attend to my out-
cry; * hearken to my prayer from lips without
deceit.

From you let my judgment come; * your eyes behold what is right.

Though you test my heart, searching it in the night, * though you try me with fire, you shall find no malice in me.

My mouth has not transgressed after the manner of man; * according to the words of your lips I have kept the ways of the law.

My steps have been steadfast in your paths, * my feet have not faltered.

I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God; * incline your ear to me; hear my word.

Show your wondrous kindness, O savior of those who flee * from their foes to refuge at your right hand.

Keep me as the apple of your eye; hide me in the shadow of your wings * from the wicked who use violence against me.

My ravenous enemies beset me; they shut up their cruel hearts, * their mouths speak proudly.

Their steps even now surround me; * crouching to the ground, they fix their gaze,

Like lions hungry for prey, * like young lions lurking in hiding.

Rise, O LORD, confront them and cast them down; rescue me by your sword from the wicked, * by your hand, O LORD, from mortal men:

From mortal men whose portion in life is in

this world, * where with your treasures you fill their bellies.

Their sons are enriched * and bequeath their abundance to their little ones.

But I in justice shall behold your face; * on waking, I shall be content in your presence.

Psalm 17—I Thanksgiving for Help and Victory

I love you, O LORD, my strength, * O LORD, my rock, my fortress, my deliverer.

My God, my rock of refuge, * my shield, the horn of my salvation, my stronghold!

Praised be the LORD, I exclaim, * and I am safe from my enemies.

The breakers of death surged round about me,
* the destroying floods overwhelmed me;

The cords of the nether world enmeshed me,
* the snares of death overtook me.

In my distress I called upon the LORD * and cried out to my God:

From his temple he heard my voice, * and my cry to him reached his ears.

The earth swayed and quaked; the foundations of the mountains trembled * and shook when his wrath flared up.

Smoke rose from his nostrils, and a devouring fire from his mouth * that kindled coals into flame.

And he inclined the heavens and came down,
* with dark clouds under his feet.

He mounted a cherub and flew, * borne on
the wings of the wind.

And he made darkness the cloak about him; *
dark, misty rain-clouds his wrap.

From the brightness of his presence * coals
were kindled to flame.

And the LORD thundered from heaven, * the
Most High gave forth his voice;

He sent forth his arrows to put them to flight,
* with frequent lightnings he routed them.

Then the bed of the sea appeared, * and the
foundations of the world were laid bare,

At the rebuke of the LORD, * at the blast of
the wind of his wrath.

He reached out from on high and grasped me;
* he drew me out of the deep waters.

He rescued me from my mighty enemy * and
from my foes, who were too powerful for me.

They attacked me in the day of my calamity, *
but the LORD came to my support.

He set me free in the open, * and rescued me,
because he loves me.

The LORD rewarded me according to my
justice, * according to the cleanness of my hands
he requited me,

For I kept the ways of the LORD * and was
not disloyal to my God;

For his ordinances were all present to me, *
and his statutes I put not from me,

But I was wholehearted toward him, * and I
was on my guard against guilt.

And the LORD requited me according to my
justice, * according to the cleanness of my hands
in his sight.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: Of my goods you have
no need. In you have I trusted; preserve me, O
Lord!

During Lent: I live, says the Lord. I do not
desire the death of the sinner, but that he be
converted and live.

Passion Week: Deliver me, Lord, and set me
beside you; then let any hand fight against me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alle-
luia.

Continue with "Love truth and peace . . ." on
page 89 ff.

SATURDAY PRIME

The introductory prayer and hymn are given
on page 85.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: The Lord lives.

During Lent: I live.

Passion Week: Deliver me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia.

Psalm 17-II

Thanksgiving for Help
and Victory

Toward the faithful you are faithful, * toward the wholehearted you are wholehearted,

Toward the sincere you are sincere, * but toward the crooked you are astute;

For lowly people you save * but haughty eyes you bring low;

You indeed, O LORD, give light to my lamp;
* O my God, you brighten the darkness about me;

For with your aid I run against an armed band, * and by the help of my God I leap over a wall.

God's way is unerring, the promise of the LORD is fire-tried; * he is a shield to all who take refuge in him.

For who is God except the LORD? * Who is a rock, save our God?

The God who girded me with strength * and kept my way unerring;

Who made my feet swift as those of hinds * and set me on the heights;

Who trained my hands for war * and my arms to bend a bow of brass.

You have given me your saving shield; your right hand has upheld me, * and you have stooped to make me great.

You made room for my steps; * unwavering
was my stride.

I pursued my enemies and overtook them, *
nor did I turn again till I made an end of them.

I smote them and they could not rise; * they
fell beneath my feet.

And you girded me with strength for war; *
you subdued my adversaries beneath me.

My enemies you put to flight before me, * and
those who hated me you destroyed.

They cried for help—but no one saved them; *
to the LORD—but he answered them not.

I ground them fine as the dust before the
wind; * like the mud in the streets I trampled
them down.

You rescued me from the strife of the people;
* you made me head over nations;

A people I had not known became my slaves;
* as soon as they heard me they obeyed.

The foreigners fawned and cringed before me;
* they staggered forth from their fortresses.

The LORD live! And blessed be my Rock! *
Extolled be God my savior.

O God, who granted me vengeance, who made
peoples subject to me * and preserved me from
my enemies,

Truly above my adversaries you exalt me *
and from the violent man you have rescued me.

Therefore will I proclaim you, O LORD,

among the nations, * and I will sing praise to your name,

You who gave great victories to your king and showed kindness to your anointed, * to David and his posterity forever.

Psalm 18

God's Glory in the Heavens
and in the Law

The heavens declare the glory of God, * and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.

Day pours out the word to day, * and night to night imparts knowledge;

Not a word nor a discourse * whose voice is not heard;

Through all the earth their voice resounds, * and to the ends of the world, their message.

He has pitched a tent there for the sun, which comes forth like the groom from his bridal chamber * and, like a giant, joyfully runs its course.

At one end of the heavens it comes forth, and its course is to their other end; * nothing escapes its heat.

The law of the LORD is perfect, * refreshing the soul;

The decree of the LORD is trustworthy, * giving wisdom to the simple.

The precepts of the LORD are right, * rejoicing the heart;

The command of the LORD is clear, * enlightening the eye;

The fear of the LORD is pure, * enduring forever;

The ordinances of the LORD are true, * all of them just;

They are more precious than gold, * than a heap of purest gold;

Sweeter also than syrup * or honey from the comb.

Though your servant is careful of them, * very diligent in keeping them,

Yet who can detect failings? * Cleanse me from my unknown faults!

From wanton sin especially, restrain your servant; * let it not rule over me.

Then shall I be blameless and innocent * of serious sin.

Let the words of my mouth and the thought of my heart find favor * before you, O LORD, my rock and my redeemer.

Psalm 19 Prayer for the King in Time of War

The LORD answer you in time of distress; * the name of the God of Jacob defend you!

May he send you help from the sanctuary, * from Sion may he sustain you.

May he remember all your offerings * and graciously accept your holocaust.

May he grant you what is in your heart * and fulfill your every plan.

May we shout for joy at your victory and raise the standards in the name of our God. * The LORD grant all your requests!

Now I know that the LORD has given victory to his anointed, that he has answered him from his holy heaven * with the strength of his victorious right hand.

Some are strong in chariots; some in horses; * but we are strong in the name of the LORD, our God.

Though they bow down and fall, * yet we stand erect and firm.

O LORD, grant victory to the king, * and answer us when we call upon you.

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: The Lord lives, and blessed be the God of my salvation.

During Lent: I live, says the Lord. I do not desire the death of the sinner, but that he be converted and live.

Passion Week: Deliver me, Lord, and set me beside you; then let any hand fight against me.

Paschaltide: Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia.

Continue with "Love truth and peace . . ." on page 89 ff.

SUNDAY VESPERS

Though the text of this Hour is designed primarily for private recitation, a group of Oblates may recite it together if they agree upon the manner of recitation. We suggest the following plan:

1. The priest or leader recites all Versicles (V) and intones the antiphon at the beginning of each psalm. He also recites the Chapter, the Our Father, and the Oration.
2. The group divides into two choirs and alternates in the recitation of the psalms and hymn. One group recites the first verse or stanza, the other group the second verse, and so on.
3. All together answer the Responsories (R) and recite the antiphon at the end of each psalm. If the antiphon of the Blessed Virgin is to be recited at the close of the Hour, all together recite the hymn and the Responsory; the priest or leader recites the Versicle and the Oration.

The priest or leader may give alternate or more specific directions to a particular group.

SUNDAY VESPERS

Our Father. Hail Mary.

V. O God, come to my assistance.

R. O Lord, make haste to help me. * Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the

Holy Ghost. * As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.
Alleluia. (From Septuagesima to Easter, instead of Alleluia is said: Praise be to you, O Lord, King of eternal glory.)

Antiphon:

Throughout the year: The Lord said.

Paschaltide: Alleluia.

Psalm 109

The Messias: King, Priest
and Conqueror

The LORD said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand * till I make your enemies your footstool."

The scepter of your power the LORD will stretch forth from Sion: * "Rule in the midst of your enemies.

Yours is princely power in the day of your birth, in holy splendor; * before the daystar, like the dew, I have begotten you."

The LORD has sworn, and he will not repent: * "You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchisedec."

The LORD is at your right hand; * he will crush kings on the day of his wrath.

He will do judgment on the nations, heaping up corpses; * he will crush heads over the wide earth.

From the brook by the wayside he will drink:
* therefore will he lift up his head.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son * and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, * world without end. Amen.

Antiphon: The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand."

Antiphon: Great are the works of the Lord.

Psalm 110 Praise of God for His Goodness

I will give thanks to the LORD with all my heart * in the company and assembly of the just.

Great are the works of the LORD, * exquisite in all their delights.

Majesty and glory are his work, * and his justice endures forever.

He has won renown for his wondrous deeds; * gracious and merciful is the LORD.

He has given food to those who fear him; * he will forever be mindful of his covenant.

He has made known to his people the power of his works, * giving them the inheritance of the nations.

The works of his hands are faithful and just; * sure are all his precepts.

Reliable forever and ever, * wrought in truth and equity.

He has sent deliverance to his people; he has ratified his covenant forever; * holy and awesome is his name.

The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; prudent are all who live by it. * His praise endures forever.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son * and to the Holy Ghost:

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, * world without end. Amen.

Antiphon: Great are the works of the Lord, sought by all that delight in them.

Antiphon: He who fears the Lord.

Psalm 111 *The Blessings of the Just Man*

Happy the man who fears the LORD, * who greatly delights in his commands.

His posterity shall be mighty upon the earth; * the upright generation shall be blessed.

Wealth and riches shall be in his house; * his generosity shall endure forever.

He dawns through the darkness, a light for the upright; * he is gracious and merciful and just.

Well for the man who is gracious and lends, * who conducts his affairs with justice;

He shall never be moved; * the just man shall be in everlasting remembrance.

An evil report he shall not fear; * his heart is firm, trusting in the LORD.

His heart is steadfast; he shall not fear * till he looks down upon his foes.

Lavishly he gives to the poor; his generosity shall endure forever; * his horn shall be exalted in glory.

The wicked man shall see it and be vexed; he shall gnash his teeth and pine away; * the desire of the wicked shall perish.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son * and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, * world without end. Amen.

Antiphon: He who fears the Lord, greatly delights in His commandments.

Antiphon: Blessed be the Name.

Psalm 112

Praise of the Lord for His
Care of the Lowly

Praise, you servants of the LORD, * praise the name of the LORD.

Blessed be the name of the LORD * both now and forever.

From the rising to the setting of the sun * is the name of the LORD to be praised.

High above all nations is the LORD; * above the heavens is his glory.

Who is like the LORD, our God, who is enthroned on high * and looks upon the heavens and the earth below?

He raises up the lowly from the dust; * from the dunghill he lifts up the poor

To seat them with princes, * with the princes
of his own people.

He establishes in her home the barren wife *
as the joyful mother of children.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son * and
to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever
shall be, * world without end. Amen.

Antiphon: Blessed be the Name of the Lord
forever.

Antiphon during Paschaltide: Alleluia, alle-
luia, alleluia.

Chapter

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord
Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and the God
of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribu-
lations.

R. Thanks be to God.

Hymn

O Mighty Maker of the light,
Who made the brightness of the days,
And gave the world its birth in time
By calling forth those glad new rays.

You joined the morning with the eve
And bade us call the hours Day.
But now the darkness on us falls.
Do hear the tearful prayers we pray.

Let not our soul be bound in sin,
Nor banished from the gift of life;
While thinking earthly thoughts alone,
It casts itself in chains of strife.

But let it knock at heaven's door
And grant it grace, life's prize to win.
May we all harmful things avoid
And cleanse ourselves from every sin.

Do grant us this, O Father God,
And Equal Son and Spirit Grace,
Who rule the world and all our souls
In every time and every place. Amen.

V. Let my prayer be directed, O Lord,

R. As incense in your sight.

Antiphon: All generations.

The Magnificat

My soul magnifies the Lord, * and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior;

Because he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaid; * for, behold, henceforth all generations shall call me blessed;

Because he who is mighty has done great things for me, * and holy is his name;

And for generation upon generation is his mercy, * to those who fear him.

He has shown might with his arm, * he has scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart.

He has put down the mighty from their thrones, * and has exalted the lowly.

He has filled the hungry with good things, * and the rich he has sent away empty.

He has given help to Israel, his servant, * mindful of his mercy—

Even as he spoke to our fathers— * to Abraham and to his posterity forever.

Antiphon: All generations shall call me blessed, for God has regarded his lowly handmaid (*P.T.* Alleluia).

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father (aloud)

As laid down in the holy Rule (ch. 13), the Our Father is said aloud at Vespers and Lauds when the office is said in common, “on account of the thorns of scandal which are apt to spring up. Thus those who hear it, being warned by the covenant which they make in that prayer when they say, ‘Forgive us as we forgive,’ may cleanse themselves of faults against that covenant.”

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

The proper oration to be said is the same as the Collect of the Sunday Mass. The following prayer, however, may be said in its place:

Let us pray

Almighty and everlasting God, grant unto us an increase of faith, hope and charity; and that we may obtain what you promise, make us love what you command. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, Your son, who is living and reigning with you, in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, forever and ever. Amen.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

V. Let us bless the Lord.

R. Thanks be to God.

V. May the souls of the faithful departed through the mercy of God rest in peace.

R. Amen.

If Compline is not to be said until later in the day, the Our Father is said silently followed by the recitation of the antiphon of the Blessed Virgin according to the season, together with its versicle, response and oration (see page 138 fl.). After the antiphon, the following is said:

V. May the divine assistance remain always with us.

R. And with our absent brethren. Amen.

The prayer after Office is given on page 84.

COMPLINE

For public recitation of Compline, the parts indicated by a P are to be taken by the priest; those indicated by an L are to be taken by a leader from among the group of Oblates. The Confiteor will be recited according to the arrangement given in the section for public recitation. For the recitation of the psalms and hymn, the group should divide into two choirs. The first choir will recite the first verse or stanza, the other choir the second, and so on.

COMPLINE

I.. Pray, Lord (Father), a blessing.

P. May almighty God grant us a peaceful night and a perfect end.

All: Amen.

L. Brethren, be sober and watchful! Your adversary the devil goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith. But you, O Lord, have mercy on us.

All: Thanks be to God.

P. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

All: Who made heaven and earth.

(Our Father silently)

Act of Contrition

For private recitation:

I confess to almighty God, to Blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to our holy Father Benedict, and to all the saints, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed: through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore I pray Blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, our holy Father Benedict, and all the saints, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

May almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to life everlasting.
Amen.

† May the almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution and remission of our sins.
Amen.

Convert us, O God our Savior . . . as on page
133.

For public recitation:

P. I confess. . . .

All: May almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and bring you to life everlasting.

P. Amen.

All: I confess to almighty God, / to Blessed Mary ever Virgin, / to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, / to the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, to our holy Father Benedict, / to all the saints and to you, Father, / that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed: / through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. / Therefore I pray Blessed Mary ever Virgin, / blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, / the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, our holy Father Benedict, / all the saints and you, Father, / to pray to the Lord our God for me.

P. May almighty God have mercy on you, forgive you your sins, and bring you to life everlasting.

All: Amen.

P. May the almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon, absolution and remission of our sins.

All: Amen.

P. Convert us, O God our Savior.

All: And turn away your anger from us.

P. O God, come to my assistance.

All: O Lord, make haste to help me. * Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost. * As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Alleluia. (From Septuagesima to Easter, instead of Alleluia is said: Praise be to you, O Lord, King of eternal glory.)

Psalm 4

Joyful Confidence in God

When I call, answer me, O my just God, * you who relieve me when I am in distress;

Have pity on me, * and hear my prayer!

Men of rank, how long will you be dull of heart? * Why do you love what is vain and seek after falsehood?

Know that the LORD does wonders for his faithful one; * the LORD will hear me when I call upon him.

Tremble, and sin not; * reflect, upon your beds, in silence.

Offer just sacrifices, * and trust in the LORD.

Many say, "Oh, that we might see better times!" * O LORD, let the light of your countenance shine upon us! .

You put gladness into my heart, * more than when grain and wine abound.

As soon as I lie down, I fall peacefully asleep,
* for you alone, O LORD, bring security to my dwelling.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son * and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, * world without end. Amen.

Psalm 90 Security under God's Protection

You who dwell in the shelter of the Most High, * who abide in the shadow of the Almighty,

Say to the LORD, "My refuge and my fortress, * my God, in whom I trust."

For he will rescue you from the snare of the fowler, * from the destroying pestilence.

With his pinions he will cover you, and under his wings you shall take refuge; * his faithfulness is a buckler and a shield.

You shall not fear the terror of the night * nor the arrow that flies by day;

Not the pestilence that roams in darkness * nor the devastating plague at noon.

Though a thousand fall at your side, ten thousand at your right side, * near you it shall not come.

Rather with your eyes shall you behold * and see the requital of the wicked,

Because you have the LORD for your refuge;
* you have made the Most High your strong-hold.

No evil shall befall you, * nor shall affliction come near your tent,

For to his angels he has given command about you, * that they guard you in all your ways.

Upon their hands they shall bear you up, * lest you dash your foot against a stone.

You shall tread upon the asp and the viper;
* you shall trample down the lion and the dragon.

Because he clings to me, I will deliver him; * I will set him on high because he acknowledges my name.

He shall call upon me, and I will answer him;
* I will be with him in distress;

I will deliver him and glorify him; with length of days I will gratify him * and will show him my salvation.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son * and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, * world without end. Amen.

Psalm 133 Exhortation to the Night Watch
 to Bless the Lord

Come, bless the LORD, * all you servants of the LORD

Who stand in the house of the LORD * during the hours of night.

Lift up your hands toward the sanctuary, * and bless the LORD.

May the LORD bless you from Sion, * the maker of heaven and earth.

Glory be to the Father and to the Son * and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, * world without end. Amen.

Hymn

As twilight now draws near its close,
Creator of the world, we pray
That in your goodness you will be
Our stronghold till the coming day.

Grant rest without disturbing dreams.
Let nothing lead us into sin.
Ward off the evil one's assaults.
Bless, guard this night we now begin.

O loving Father, hear our prayer,
Through Christ your only Son our Lord:
One God, with God the Holy Ghost;
One King, eternally adored. Amen.

Chapter (P)

You, O Lord, are among us, and your holy name has been invoked upon us; forsake us not, O Lord our God.

All: Thanks be to God.

L. Keep us, O Lord, as the apple of your eye.
(*P.T.* Alleluia.)

All: Protect us under the shadow of your wings. (*P.T.* Alleluia.)

P. Our Father (*silently*)

And lead us not into temptation.

All: But deliver us from evil.

P. I believe in God (*silently*)

The resurrection of the body.

All: And life everlasting. Amen.

P. Vouchsafe, O Lord, this night

All: To keep us from sin.

P. O Lord, hear my prayer.

All: And let my cry come unto you.

Let us pray

Visit, we beseech you, O Lord, this dwelling and drive from it all the snares of the devil; may your holy angels dwell here to keep us in peace, and may your blessing be always with us. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who is living and reigning with you in the unity of the Holy Ghost, God, forever and ever.

All: Amen.

P. O Lord, hear my prayer.

All: And let my cry come unto you.

P. Let us bless the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

P. May the almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son  and Holy Ghost, bless and keep us. All: Amen.

One of the following antiphons of the Blessed Virgin is prayed after the Office.

ANTIPHONS OF THE BLESSED VIRGIN

I

From the first Sunday of Advent until the Feast of the Purification, February 2, inclusively:

O loving Mother of our Savior, / mankind's ready entrance into heaven, and star of the sea: / help a fallen people striving once again to rise from sin. / You gave birth, dear Mother, while nature stood in awe, to your own all holy Maker. / Ever Virgin, after and before you received from Gabriel that first solemn Ave: / show your mercy toward us sinners.

During Advent the following is said:

V. The angel of the Lord declared unto Mary.

R. And she conceived by the Holy Ghost.

Let us pray

Penetrate our hearts, Lord, with your grace; and now that the incarnation of Christ your Son has been revealed to us through the angel's word, enable us also to share in his passion and cross and thus be brought to a glorious resurrection. Through the same Christ our Lord.

R^v. Amen.

From Christmas Eve to Candelmas the following versicle and oration is said:

V. After Childbirth you remained a pure Virgin.

R^v. Mother of God, pray for us.

Let us pray

O God, you have bestowed on mankind the blessings of eternal salvation through Mary's virgin motherhood. In your mercy, grant that we may experience her powerful intercession, now that we have received through her the author of life, our Lord Jesus Christ your Son.

R^v. Amen.

II

From Compline of the Purification until Compline of Wednesday in Holy Week:

Hail, holy Queen of the heavens! / We acclaim you, Queen of the angels! / Greetings, Mary, root and gateway, bearing promised light to mankind! / Joy be yours, exalted Virgin, brightest jewel in all creation! / Farewell, O fairest, our Lady! / and intercede for us with Christ our Savior.

V. Grant that I may praise you, O holy Virgin.

R^v. Give me strength against your enemies.

Let us pray

Protect us in our weakness, merciful God, we humbly pray; and may the holy Mother of God, whose memory we honor, help us by her prayers to rise from our sins. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Rv. Amen.

III

From Compline on Holy Saturday until the Saturday after Pentecost:

O Queen of heaven, rejoice, alleluia! / because the Son you were chosen to bear, alleluia! / has risen as He foretold, alleluia! / Pray for us to God, alleluia!

V. Rejoice and be glad, O Virgin Mary, alleluia!

Rv. For the Lord is truly risen, alleluia!

Let us pray

O God, through your loving-kindness the world now rejoices over the resurrection of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ. Graciously hear our prayers and grant us the assistance of his Virgin Mother Mary in obtaining the joys of everlasting life. Through the same Christ our Lord.

Rv. Amen.

IV

From the first Vespers of Trinity Sunday until

the Saturday before the first Sunday of Advent:

Hail! holy Queen, / Mother of mercy, / our life, our sweetness and our hope. / To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve. / To thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. / Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us. / And after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus. / O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary.

V. Pray for us, O holy Mother of God.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

Almighty, everlasting God! Through the Holy Spirit you prepared the body and soul of the glorious Virgin Mother Mary to be a worthy dwelling-place for your Son. Grant, we pray you, that we who rejoice in her memory may be freed from present evils and from eternal death by her loving intercession. Through the same Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

Last of all is said:

V. May the divine assistance remain always with us.

R. And with our absent brethren. Amen.

The prayer after Office is given on page 84.

PRAYER TO ST. BENEDICT FOR A HAPPY DEATH

St. Benedict has long rivaled St. Joseph in the role of patron of a happy death. The following account of our holy Father's death is given us by his biographer, Pope St. Gregory the Great:

"In the year that was to be his last, the man of God, Benedict, foretold the day of his holy death to a number of his disciples. . . . Six days before he died he gave orders for his tomb to be opened. Almost immediately he was seized with a violent fever that rapidly wasted his remaining energy. Each day his condition grew worse until finally on the sixth day he had his disciples carry him into the chapel, where he received the Body and Blood of our Lord to gain strength for his approaching end. Then, supporting his weakened body on the arms of his brethren, he stood with his hands raised to heaven and as he prayed breathed his last."

The following prayer to St. Benedict for a happy death is said nightly in monasteries and convents of our Order. Oblates would do well to follow a similar practice.

PRAYER FOR A HAPPY DEATH

O holy Father Benedict, whose very name signifies your blessedness, you most joyfully offered

your angelic soul to God while you stood in prayer with your arms raised to heaven; and you have promised to defend us from the devil's attacks at the hour of death if we daily recall to you your own glorious death and heavenly joys. Protect me, therefore, O glorious Father, today and every day by your holy blessing, so that I may never be separated from our blessed Jesus, nor from the company of you and all the saints. Amen.

SPECIAL PRAYERS

COMMEMORATION OF ST. HENRY

Antiphon: This man, despising the world and triumphing over earthly things, has laid up treasure in heaven by word and deed.

V. The Lord led the just one through right ways.

R. And showed him the kingdom of God.

Let us pray

O God, who removed blessed HENRY your Confessor from the government of an earthly empire and raised him to the kingdom of heaven: we humbly beseech you that, just as by the fullness of your grace you gave him strength to overcome the enticements of this life, so you would enable us, through his example, to shun the blandishments of this world and come to you

with clean hearts. Through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

COMMEMORATION OF ST. FRANCES OF ROME

Antiphon: The kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking good pearls; when he had found one pearl of great price, he gave all that he had and bought it.

V. With your comeliness and your beauty

R. Go forth, advance prosperously, and reign.

Let us pray

O God, who, among the other wonders of your grace, favored your servant FRANCES with the familiar companionship of an Angel: grant, we beseech you, that helped by her prayers we may likewise one day be admitted into the company of the holy Angels. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

COMMEMORATION OF ALL HOLY MONKS

Antiphon: The souls of the Saints who have followed in the footsteps of Christ rejoice in heaven; and, because they have despised the world for love of him, therefore do they now exult with Christ forever.

V. But the just shall live forevermore,

R. And their reward is with the Lord.

Let us pray

Grant, we beseech you, O Lord, that the example of the HOLY MONKS of our Order may stir us to a better life, so that we may imitate the actions of those whose memory we celebrate. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

LITANY OF ST. BENEDICT

(For private use only)

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, have mercy on us.

Lord, have mercy on us.

Christ, hear us.

Christ, graciously hear us.

God, the Father of Heaven, *Have mercy on us.*

God, the Son, Redeemer of the world, *Have mercy on us.*

God, the Holy Ghost,

Holy Trinity, one God,

Holy Mary, *Pray for us.*

Holy Mother of God, *Pray for us.*

Holy Virgin of virgins,

Holy Father, St. Benedict,

Father, worthy of admiration,

Father, worthy of veneration,

Father, worthy of love,

St. Benedict, gifted with sanctity from your childhood,

St. Benedict, who fled from the corrupt ways of vice, *Pray for us*

St. Benedict, who loved a hermit's life,

St. Benedict, fed by St. Roman,

St. Benedict, who rolled yourself among the briars,

St. Benedict, conqueror of lust,

St. Benedict, teacher of rustics,

St. Benedict, restorer of the apostolic life,

St. Benedict, founder of monasteries,

St. Benedict, framer of rules,

St. Benedict, gentle teacher of monks,

St. Benedict, faithful observer of the precepts,

St. Benedict, most prudent guide of the erring,

St. Benedict, who divested death of its terrors,

St. Benedict, spurner of demons,

St. Benedict, destroyer of enchantments,

St. Benedict, prophet of future events,

St. Benedict, who caused St. Maurus to walk upon the waters,

St. Benedict, who freed St. Placid from the deep,

St. Benedict, who saw the soul of your sister ascending into heaven,

St. Benedict, who fortified yourself, at your departure, by receiving the Body and Blood of our Lord,

St. Benedict, who, with your eyes raised to

Heaven, breathed forth your soul in the arms of your disciples,

St. Benedict, who, by the straight path of the East, ascended from your cell into Heaven,

St. Benedict, who triumphantly entered Heaven,

St. Benedict, now enjoying Christ in the embraces of eternal love,

Be merciful, *Spare us, O Lord.*

Be merciful, *Graciously hear us, O Lord.*

From prevarication in your commandments, *Deliver us, O Lord.*

From transgression of our promises, *Deliver us, O Lord.*

From all evil,

By our holy Father's exemplary life,

By his holy poverty,

By his most ardent charity,

By his most pure chastity,

By his most profound humility,

By his most fervent prayers,

By his admirable abstinence,

By his holy fastings,

By his holy silence,

By his merits and intercession,

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, *Spare us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, *Graciously hear us, O Lord.*

Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world, *Have mercy on us, O Lord.*

V. Intercede for us, O holy Father St. Benedict.

R. That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Let us pray

O Almighty and merciful God, who did cause our holy Father St. Benedict to pass to the glory of Heaven in the sight of his disciples, grant that, as he was the glorious pastor of monks, we, being aided by his prayers, and following his example, may, through your gifts, deserve to arrive at eternal life. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

PART THREE

CEREMONIAL

INVESTITURE OF OBLATE NOVICES

Lay Catholics who wish to become Oblates of St. Benedict and who are judged sincere in their desire may be invested at any time by the Abbot of a Benedictine monastery, or by any priest delegated by him. The ceremony should take place in a church or chapel at the altar, on which there should be *two lighted candles*, with *holy water* and sprinkler nearby, and, if possible, a relic of St. Benedict exposed upon the altar. The one investing should also have at hand a sufficient number of *blessed Medals and small black scapulars of St. Benedict*, one for each of the candidates.

INTRODUCTORY PRAYERS

The Abbot or the priest delegated by him, vested in a white stole, goes to the Epistle side of the altar and stands facing the body of the church. Those to be invested come up and kneel on the floor in front of the altar.

The Abbot or priest begins by making the sign of the cross over himself (the candidates doing likewise) and then says the following prayers over those to be invested:

V. We have received your mercy, O God.

R. In the midst of your temple.

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father (silently)

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Save your servant (*s.*)

R. Who hopes (*hope*) in you, O my God.

V. Be to him (*her, them*), O Lord, a tower of strength.

R. Against the enemy.

V. Let not the enemy prevail against him (*her, them*).

R. Nor let the devil draw near to hurt him (*her, them*).

V. Send him (*her, them*) help, O Lord, from your Holy Place.

R. And out of Sion protect him (*her, them*).

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

Let us pray

We beseech you, O Lord, forgive the sins of your servants so that we, who by our own acts are unable to please you, may be saved through the intercession of the Mother of your Son, our Lord.

May the intercession of our holy Father Benedict commend us, Lord, we beseech you, that through his patronage we may obtain what our own merits cannot avail us. Through Christ our Lord.

Ry. Amen.

QUESTIONING OF CANDIDATES

The Abbot, or priest, then asks all the candidates together:

What do you seek?

The candidates all answer together:

The mercy of God / and reception as an Oblate Novice (*as Oblate Novices*) of Saint Benedict.

BLESSING OF SCAPULARS

The Abbot, or priest, now turns toward the Epistle side of the altar, where the small black scapulars have been placed, and blesses them as follows: (N.B. The attention of the officiant is called to Canon 1148, par. 2: "Consecrationes ac

benedictiones sive constitutivae sive invocativae invalidae sunt, si adhibita non fuerit formula ab Ecclesia praescripta." The Latin must therefore be used here.)

V. Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini.

R. Qui fecit caelum et terram.

V. Sit nomen Domini benedictum.

R. Ex hoc nunc et usque in saeculum.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobis-
cum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

Oremus

Domine, Jesu Christe, qui tegumen nostre mortalitatis induere dignatus es, obsecramus immensam tuae largitatis abundan-

V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R. Who has made heaven and earth.

V. May the name of the Lord be praised.

R. From henceforth, now and forever.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

Let us pray

O Lord Jesus Christ, who has deigned to be clothed in the garb of our mortal flesh, we beseech you, by your unbounded liberality,

tiam; ut hoc genus vestimenti, quo sancti Patres ad innocentiae vel humilitatis indicium abrenuntiantes saeculo ferre sanxerunt, tu ita bene **†** dicere digneris, ut hic (*hi, haec, hae*) famulus (*i, a, ae*) tuus (*i, a, ae*), qui (*quae*) hoc indutus (*i, a, ae*) fuerit (*fuerint*) vestimento, te quoque induere mereatur (*merentur*). Qui vivis et regnas per omnia saecula saeculorum.

R. Amen.

Oremus

Domine, Deus, bonarum virtutum dator, et omnium benedictionum largus infusor, te subnixis precibus deprecamur: ut hanc (*has*) vestem (*vestes*) bene **†** dicere et sancti **†** siccare digneris, quam

so to bless **†** this vestment, which the Fathers of old wished to be worn by those who renounced the world, as a symbol of innocence and humility, that this (*these*) your servant (*s*), being clothed with it, may become worthy to be vested with you. Who lives and reigns world without end.

R. Amen.

Let us pray

O Lord, the Author of all goodness, and the bountiful Dispenser of all blessings, we humbly beseech you, to bless **†** and sanctify **†** this (*these*) garment (*s*), which your servant (*s*) is (*are*) about to put

(*quas*) famulus (*i, a, ae*) tuus (*i, a, ae*) pro indicio cognoscendae religionis induere vult (*volunt*); ut inter filios et filias sancti Patris nostri Benedicti tibi cognoscatur (*cognoscantur*) dicatus (*i, a, ae*). Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

R. Amen.

The Abbot, or priest, then sprinkles the scapulars with holy water.

INVESTITURE OF CANDIDATES

The candidates, one by one, come up and kneel on the top altar step where the Abbot, or priest, places a scapular over the shoulders of each in turn, saying to each (or to all if there are many):

May the Lord clothe you with the new man who has been created according to God in justness and holiness of truth.

After all have received the scapular they return to their places and kneel as before. The Abbot or priest prays over them as follows:

Let us pray

Attend, O most kind Lord and God, to our

on, as a sign of his (*her, their*) oblation to you; so that, being numbered among the sons and daughters of our holy Father Benedict, he (*she, they*) may thus be recognized as dedicated to you. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

prayers, and let this (*these*) your servant (*s*), whom we are receiving into union and affiliation with our Order, be strengthened with unfailing firmness, so that, persevering in his (*her, their*) holy resolution, he (*she, they*) may serve you in all holiness. Through Christ our Lord.

R^v. Amen.

Let us pray

O God, who did call our most blessed Father and Lawgiver Benedict to serve you alone, in seclusion from the turmoil of the world: grant, we beseech you, to this (*these*) your servant (*s*), hastening to your service according to his teaching, constant perseverance and perfect victory unto the end. Through Christ our Lord.

R^v. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

The Abbot, or priest, then gives the final blessing:

Benedictio Dei omnipotentis, Patris, et Filii , et Spiritus Sancti, descendat super te (*vos*) et maneat semper.

R^v. Amen.

May the blessing of almighty God, of the Father, and of the Son , and of the Holy Ghost, come down upon you and abide with you forever.

R^v. Amen.

He then takes the relic of St. Benedict (if it is at hand) and presents it to be kissed by each.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

The officiant should, before dismissing the Oblate Novices, present each with a blessed Medal of St. Benedict. He should also see to it that each of them provides himself with a *Manual for Oblates*.

The names and addresses of the newly invested, together with the date, month, and year of reception should be carefully noted down and a copy of the same sent to the monastery, so that the names may be preserved in the archives.

Finally, each of the newly invested Oblate Novices should be given a certificate of investiture. This certificate should be preserved so that the Novice may know (a year and a day hence) when it is time for him to make his Final Act of Oblation.

FINAL ACT OF OBLATION

A year and a day after being invested with the small black scapular of St. Benedict, Oblate Novices may make their final profession or Oblation.

Those about to make their final Act of Oblation should previously *fill out the formula of profession* or Oblation. In doing so they should choose the *name of some Benedictine Saint* whom they wish to have as their special patron and inscribe that name on the formula of profession after their own baptismal name. Having gone to Confession sometime previous, they should arrange to receive Holy Communion on the day of Oblation itself, or on the day before, or as soon thereafter as possible in order to gain the plenary indulgence attached to the Oblation.

The Abbot of a Benedictine monastery, or any priest delegated by him, may receive the Final Oblation of Novices. The ceremony should preferably take place in a church or chapel at the altar, on which there should be *four lighted candles*, and *pen and ink* on the Gospel side of the altar table itself.

The Abbot, or priest delegated, should also have *a list of the full names of the candidates*, in the order in which they are to make their Oblation. He should likewise, if it is expedient, ask each of the candidates to provide himself with

a blessed candle, which each one holds lighted in his right hand and, after the Oblation, gives over to the Abbot, or the priest, to be consumed in the service of the church where he made his Oblation. This candle is a sign that the Oblate offers not only himself but also something of his worldly possessions to God.

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY GHOST

Those about to make their final Act of Oblation come up and kneel on the floor of the altar, carrying their formula of Oblation, rolled up, in the left hand (and, if possible, a lighted candle in the right hand). The Abbot, or priest, vested in a white stole, comes to the foot of the altar and kneels on the lowest step, where he begins by making the sign of the cross over himself (the Oblate Novices doing the same), and says the following prayers, he alone rising for the orations:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love (*P.T.* Alleluia).

V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created (*P.T.* Alleluia).

R. And you will renew the face of the earth (*P.T.* Alleluia).

Let us pray

O God, who has taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit: grant us by the same Spirit to know what is right, and ever to rejoice in his consolation.

Raise up, O Lord, in your Church, the Spirit wherewith our holy Father, the Abbot Benedict, was animated: that, filled with the same, we may strive to love what he loved, and to practice what he taught. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

QUESTIONING AND ADMONITION

The Abbot, or priest, then goes up and sits in the middle of the altar platform on a faldstool (a priest uses only a chair), and proceeds to question the candidates as follows:

What do you seek?

The candidates, still kneeling, answer together:

The mercy of God and brotherhood with you / as an Oblate (*as Oblates*) of our most holy Father Benedict.

The one investing gives the following admonition:

Son (*My sons, Dear daughter, -s, in St. Benedict*), you have already sufficiently learned the rule under which you wish to serve, not only by

reading but also by a whole year of practice and experience as an Oblate Novice (*as Oblate Novices*). You are, therefore, aware under what conditions you are about to be accepted as an Oblate (*as Oblates*) of St. Benedict. If, then, you are ready and willing to observe the salutary teachings of our holy Father Benedict, according as your state in life permits, and are resolved to persevere in your holy resolution, you may now make your final Oblation; if not, then you may still freely depart.

THE PROMISES

After a brief pause, the Abbot, or priest, questions each of the Oblate Novices in turn, addressing each by name. They remain kneeling in their places and each answers as indicated.

N. N., do you renounce the vanities and pomps of the world?

R^y. I do.

Will you undertake the reformation of your life according to the spirit of the Rule of our holy Father Benedict, and observe the Statutes of the Oblates?

R^y. I will.

Will you persevere in your holy resolution until death?

R^y. With the help of God's grace, I will.

The Abbot, or priest, then answers:

Thanks be to God. Since God has given you this good will and you trust in his help, you may now make your final Act of Oblation.

FINAL ACT OF OBLATION

After he has thus questioned each one in turn, all of the Oblate Novices rise and remain standing in their places. Having unrolled the formula of Oblation, each one reads his Oblation in turn.

N.B. If, however, a considerable number of Oblate Novices are present, then each one in turn reads only the first part of the formula up to and including the place of his birth; when each in turn has read this part separately and alone, then all together read the remaining part of the formula.

Peace

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

I, _____,
(baptismal name) (Benedictine saint's name)

_____, of _____,
(family name) (place of residence)
offer myself to almighty God, / to the Blessed Virgin Mary, / and to our holy Father Benedict, /

for _____
(full name and place of monastery)

and I do promise, before God and all the Saints,
/ the reformation of my life / according to the
spirit of the Rule of the same most holy Father
Benedict, / and according to the Statutes of the
Oblates.

(name of church)

(place of church)

(month, day, and year)

(name of Oblate)

(name of Abbot or delegated priest)

When all have finished reading their Oblation, each one singly and in turn goes up to the middle in front of the lowest altar step, genuflects (and, if they have candles, kneeling on the top step before the Abbot, or priest, each kisses first the candle and then the ring of the Abbot, or the hand of the priest, and gives the lighted candle to him), and then goes up to the Gospel side of the altar, where each one signs his full name at the end of the Oblation formula. The formulas are left on the altar until after the ceremony, when they are signed by the Abbot, or priest, and sent to the monastery.

FINAL PETITION

When all have signed their Oblation and returned to their places, they say the following prayer of petition together, kneeling on the floor:

Uphold me, O Lord, according to your word, /
and I shall live: / and let me not be confounded
in my hope.

FORMAL ACCEPTANCE

The final and formal acceptance of the newly professed Oblate (s) is then announced as follows:

I. If the Abbot himself has received the Oblation, he says:

And I, as God's representative, accept your Oblation and admit you into union and affiliation with our monastery as an Oblate (*as Oblates*) and adopted son (*sons, daughter, daughters*) of our holy Father Benedict, and give you the privilege of sharing in our spiritual goods, and promise you eternal life if you persevere in your holy resolution.

II. If a monk of the Abbot's own monastery is delegated to receive the Oblation he says the following:

Acting in virtue of the authority given to me by the Right Reverend _____,
(name of Abbot)

Abbot of _____, I, as God's
(name of monastery)

representative, accept your Oblation and admit you into union and affiliation with our monastery as an Oblate (*as Oblates*) and adopted son (*sons, daughter, daughters*) of our holy Father Benedict, and give you the privilege of sharing in our spiritual goods, and promise you eternal life if you persevere in your holy resolution.

III. But if the officiant is a monk of some other monastery, or another priest, secular or religious, he uses the following formula:

Acting in virtue of the authority given to me by the Right Reverend _____
(name of Abbot)

Abbot of _____, I as God's
(name of monastery)

representative, accept your Oblation and admit you into union and affiliation with the monks of that monastery as an Oblate (*as Oblates*) and adopted son (*sons, daughter, daughters*) of our holy Father Benedict, and give you the privilege of sharing in the spiritual goods of the same monastery, and promise you eternal life if you persevere in your holy resolution.

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

The Abbot, or priest, then rises and continues:

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father (*silently*)

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Save your servant (*s*).

R. Who hopes (*hope*) in you, O my God.

V. Be unto him (*her, them*), O Lord, a tower of strength.

R. Against the enemy.

V. Let not the enemy prevail against him (*her, them*).

R. Nor let the devil draw near to hurt him (*her, them*).

V. Send him (*her, them*) help, O Lord, from your Holy Place.

R. And out of Sion protect him (*her, them*).

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

Let us pray

O God, who has been pleased to fill your holy Confessor Benedict with the spirit of all the just: grant to this (*these*) your servant (*s*) that, being

filled with the same spirit, he (*she, they*) may faithfully perform what he (*she, they*) has (*have*) promised with the help of your grace. Through

R^v. Amen.
Christ our Lord.

Let us pray

O God, who did will that the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, herself the dwelling of the Holy Ghost, should be presented in the temple: grant, we beseech you, that, through her intercession, we may become worthy to be presented in the temple of your glory. Through our Lord Jesus Christ your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the same Holy Ghost, one God, world without end.

R^v. Amen.

THE FINAL BLESSING

The Abbot, or priest, then gives the final blessing:

Pax et benedictio
Dei omnipotentis, Pa-
tris, et Filii , et Spir-
itus Sancti, descendat
super te (*vos*), et ma-
neat semper.

R^v. Amen.

May the peace and
blessing of almighty
God, of the Father, and
of the Son , and of
the Holy Ghost, come
down upon you and
abide with you forever.

R^v. Amen.

FINAL INSTRUCTIONS

Each of the newly professed Oblates should be given a certificate of Oblation, properly filled out and signed by whoever received their Oblation. They should be reminded to preserve this certificate carefully, knowing that in case of death, this day is to be marked upon the certificate, which in turn is to be sent to the monastery, so that the monks may pray for the deceased Oblate.

The Abbot, or priest, who received their Oblation should sign his own name on each of the formulas of Oblation and send them as soon as possible to the monastery for which the Oblate made his profession. He should also see that the correct address of the new Oblates is sent to the monastery.

RENEWAL OF OBLATION

Oblates should renew their Oblation *at least once a year*. They may do this at any time, but preferably on the feast of the Presentation of the Blessed Virgin (November 21), or on the anniversary of their Oblation. If they have no opportunity to assist at a public renewal of Oblation in the presence of the Abbot, or of a priest delegated by him, they may say the following prayers privately, without any special ceremony.

When it is possible to have a number of Oblates gathered together for the renewal of their Oblation, they come to the church or chapel, *two candles are lighted on the altar*, and the following ceremony is observed.

INVOCATION OF THE HOLY GHOST

The Abbot, or priest, vested in a white stole, kneels before the altar. If convenient, the Oblates come up and kneel on the floor in front of the altar. The officiant then signs himself (the Oblates doing likewise), and says the following, he alone rising for the orations:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love (*P.T. Alleluia*).

V. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created (*P.T.* Alleluia).

R. And you will renew the face of the earth
(*P.T.* Alleluia).

Let us pray

O God, who has taught the hearts of the faithful by the light of the Holy Spirit: grant us by the same Spirit to know what is right, and ever to rejoice in His consolation.

Raise up, O Lord, in your Church, the Spirit wherewith our holy Father, the Abbot Benedict, was animated: that, filled with the same, we may strive to love what he loved, and to practice what he taught. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

RENEWAL OF OBLATION

The Abbot, or priest, then goes up and sits in the middle of the altar platform on a faldstool (a priest uses only a chair) and, if he wishes, delivers a brief address on the renewal of the Oblation. This finished, the Oblates, kneeling before him, renew their Oblation, all saying the formula together and pausing as indicated.

Peace

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.
I renew my Oblation, / and do offer myself to almighty God, / to the Blessed Virgin

Mary, / and to our holy Father Benedict, / for
_____, / and I do

(full name and place of monastery)

promise, / before God and all the Saints, / the reformation of my life / according to the spirit of the Rule / of the same most holy Father Benedict, / and according to the Statutes of the Oblates.

Uphold me, O Lord, according to your word, / and I shall live: / and let me not be confounded in my hope.

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

The Abbot, or priest, then rises and continues:
Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father (silently)

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Confirm, O God, that which you have worked in us.

R. From your holy Temple, which is in Jerusalem.

V. Save your servants (*handmaids*).

R. Who hope in you, O my God.

V. Show unto us, O Lord, your mercy.

R. And grant us your salvation.

V. Be unto us, O Lord, a tower of strength.

R. Against the enemy.

- V. Let not the enemy prevail against us.
 R. Nor let the devil draw near to hurt us.
 V. O Lord, hear my prayer.
 R. And let my cry come unto you.
 V. The Lord be with you.
 R. And with your spirit.

Let us pray

O eternal God and almighty Father, who well knows the weakness of human frailty: look down, we beseech you, upon these your servants, and be pleased to strengthen our weakness with the lavish abundance of your blessing; so that we may be enabled, with the help of your grace, carefully to carry out by a holy, upright, and devout life the promises which we have made by your holy inspiration. And by keeping them, may we thus merit everlasting life. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

FINAL BLESSING

Benedictio Dei omnipotentis, Patris, et Filii , et Spiritus Sancti, descendat super vos et maneat semper.

R. Amen.

May the blessing of almighty God, of the Father, and of the Son , and of the Holy Ghost, come down upon you, and abide with you forever.

R. Amen.

PRAYERS FOR THE MEETINGS OF OBLATES

At meetings for Oblates, the Abbot, or priest-Director, kneels before the altar (while the Oblates all kneel in their places) and begins:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Come, Holy Ghost, fill the hearts of your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of your love (*P.T. Alleluia*).

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father (*silently*)

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Be mindful of your congregation.

R. Which you have possessed from the beginning.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

Let us pray

Enlighten our minds, we beseech you, O Lord, with the brightness of your light: so that we may know what to do, and be able to do what is right. Through Christ our Lord.

R.^{y.} Amen.

The Oblates then sit and the Abbot, or priest, gives a conference or instruction; or the purpose for which the meeting was called is discussed. When this has ended it is a laudable practice for the Oblates to recite together a selected part of the Office (e.g., Compline). The following prayers may also be recited—the so-called Prayers of Union, which are said daily in all Benedictine communities:

O Holy Mary, give aid to the wretched, strengthen the faint-hearted, comfort the sorrowing, pray for the faithful, plead for the clergy, intercede for the choirs of monks, and pray for all good women vowed to God; may all experience your help, who devoutly commemorate your holy name.

Most holy Confessor of the Lord, Father and Guide of monks, Benedict, intercede for the salvation of ourselves, and that of all.

V. O Lord, God of might, transform our hearts.

R.^{y.} And show your countenance, and we shall all be saved.

Let us pray

Raise up, O Lord, in your Church, the Spirit wherewith our holy Father, the Abbot Benedict, was animated: that, filled with the same, we may

strive to love what he loved, and to practice what he taught.

Grant us, we beseech you, O Lord, persevering submission to your holy will: that in our days the people dedicated to your service may increase both in merit and in number. Through Christ our Lord.

Rv. Amen.

The following prayers may then be added:

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father

V. And lead us not into temptation.

Rv. But deliver us from evil.

V. Confirm, O God, that which you have worked in us.

Rv. From your holy Temple, which is in Jerusalem.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

Rv. And let my cry come unto you.

V. The Lord be with you.

Rv. And with your spirit.

Let us pray

Grant, we beseech you, O Lord, the help of your grace, so that we may, with your help, be able to do those things which, by your inspiration, we know ought to be done.

We give you thanks, almighty God, for all your benefits. Who lives and reigns forever and ever.

R. Amen.

Be pleased, O Lord, to reward with eternal life all those who do us good for your name's sake.

R. Amen.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

R. Amen.

FORMULA OF PAPAL BLESSING

Oblates of St. Benedict have been given the privilege of receiving the Papal or Apostolic Blessing, to which is attached a plenary indulgence, twice a year from the Abbot of their respective monastery, or from the appointed Director or Moderator of the Oblates, or from a priest delegated by the Abbot, or from any other priest who has the faculties of the diocese to hear confessions.

This Papal Blessing may be given to the Oblates on two days each year which have been fixed once and for all by the Abbot of the monastery to which the Oblates belong. It should preferably be given either in the Abbey church itself, or in one under the jurisdiction of the Abbot, or in a church or chapel belonging to nuns of the Order, or in one in which the Oblates regularly and officially meet.

The blessing may not, however, be given on the same day and in the same place in which the Bishop of the diocese himself intends to give it. Nor may it be given privately to an individual Oblate, but must be given to a group of Oblates assembled for this purpose. Due to its special importance, it should not be given without a certain amount of solemnity, as is clearly implied in the instructions of the Ritual for this blessing.

PREPARATIONS

In preparation for imparting the Papal Blessing to the Oblates, the Abbot, or priest, should be vested in a surplice and a white stole (unless he give the blessing immediately after Mass, in which case he retains chasuble and stole of the color of the day). He should have a *crucifix* ready on the Epistle side of the altar, together with a copy of this Manual. A crucifix is necessary because its use in giving the blessing is a special condition for the privilege extended to Oblates.

READING OF PAPAL BRIEF

When all have assembled, the Abbot, or priest, comes to the foot of the altar. According to the Ritual, he is then instructed to read aloud, or have some other priest read aloud that part of the papal decree in which the indulgence is granted and the authority given to impart the Papal Blessing. This is first read in Latin, and then in the vernacular.

Ex Brevi Leonis Pa-
pae tertii decimi, dato
Romae, die septimo de-
cimo mensis Junii,
anno millesimo octin-
gentesimo nonagesimo
octavo.

From the Brief of
Pope Leo XIII, given
at Rome, on June 17,
1898.

“ . . . Praeterea clari-
gimur eisdem Oblatis
saecularibus totius Ordini-
nis Sancti Benedicti
veniam, ex qua duobus
tantum per annum die-
bus semel statuendis
una simul coadunati in
qualibet terrarum orbis Ecclesia, sive publi-
co sacello, in quo juxta
respectivae Congrega-
tionis statuta soleant
convenire, vere poenitentes et confessi ac
Sacra Communione re-
fecti a respectivo Moderatore cum Crucifixo
et unico Crucis signo
servatisque servandis,
Nostro et Romani Pon-
tificis pro tempore existentis nomine et au-
toritate Plenaria cum
adnexa Indulgentia
benedictionem recipere
queant adhibita for-
mula jam statuta a felici
recordationis Bene-

“ . . . Moreover, We
grant to these same
Secular Oblates of the
entire Benedictine Or-
der, the privilege of
receiving from their re-
spective Director or
Moderator the Papal
Blessing with a plenary
indulgence in our name
and authority or that
of the reigning Pontiff.
This blessing may be
given each year on two
separate days fixed once
and for all, when the
Oblates, being truly
penitent and having
gone to Confession and
received Holy Communion,
are assembled, anywhere in the world,
in any church, or in any public chapel
where they are accus-
tomed to assemble ac-
cording to the statutes
of their respective Con-
gregation. This bless-

dicto Papae quarto decimo litteris Encyclicis quae incipiunt '*Exemplis Praedecessorum*,' et hac jugiter firma remanente lege, nimirum ut haec benedictio neque eodem die, neque in eodem loco imperatiatur, ubi jam imperiat Episcopus. . . ."

ing is to be given with a crucifix and a single sign of the cross according to the form prescribed by Our Predecessor of happy memory, Benedict XIV, in his Encyclical, '*Exemplis Praedecessorum*.' Care must be taken, however, that the law of the Church be always observed whereby this blessing may not be given either on the same day or in the same place where the diocesan Bishop himself gives it. . . ."

ANNOUNCEMENT OF INDULGENCE

While the reading of the above would seem sufficient to satisfy the prescription of the Ritual, the indulgence may now be more formally announced somewhat after the following manner:

In virtue of the faculties granted by Pope Leo XIII, of happy memory, in the above Papal Brief, given at St. Peter's in Rome, on June 17, 1898, to the Right Reverend Hildebrand de

Hemptinne, O.S.B., Abbot Primate of the Order of St. Benedict, in favor of the Oblates of St. Benedict, a plenary indulgence, applicable to the souls in purgatory, is, therefore, granted, in the name of the Sovereign Pontiff, our holy Father the Pope, to all here present, provided that they have gone to Confession and received Holy Communion, and, being now truly sorry for their sins, have received this Papal Blessing according to the prescribed rite and form, and prayed for the Church and the Pope.

THE BLESSING

The Abbot, or priest, then gives a brief address, explaining the nature of this blessing, if necessary, and reminding the Oblates to have sorrow for their sins, because this is one of the conditions for gaining the indulgence.

After this, the Abbot, or priest, without any minister at his side, kneels alone on the lowest step in front of the altar, and prays as follows:

V. Adjutorium nostrum in nomine Domini.

R. Qui fecit caelum et terram.

V. Salvum fac populum tuum, Domine.

V. Our help is in the name of the Lord.

R. Who created heaven and earth.

V. Save your people, O Lord.

R. Et benedic hereditati tuae.

V. Dominus vobis-cum.

R. Et cum spiritu tuo.

R. And bless your inheritance.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

He then rises and, still facing the altar, says the following prayer:

Oremus

Omnipotens et misericors Deus, da nobis auxilium de sancto, et vota populi hujus in humilitate cordis veniam peccatorum possidentis, tuamque benedictionem praestolantis et gratiam, clementer exaudi: dexteram tuam super eum benignus extende, ac plenitudinem divinae benedictionis effunde, qua bonis omnibus cumulatus, felicitatem et vitam consequatur aeternam. Per Christum Domi-

Let us pray

O almighty and merciful God, give us help from your Holy Place, and graciously hear the prayers of these your people, who with humble hearts, beg pardon for their sins, and await your blessing and grace: mercifully stretch forth your right hand over them, and pour forth the fullness of your divine blessing, so that they, being enriched with all good things, may attain everlasting happiness and

num nostrum.

R^v. Amen.

life. Through Christ
our Lord.

R^v. Amen.

After this, he goes up to the altar platform, bows to the cross on the altar, goes to the Epistle side, where he takes the crucifix placed there beforehand, and then turns around facing the Oblates, and pronounces the Apostolic Blessing over those present, making a single sign of the cross (an Abbot, however, makes a triple sign), and saying:

Benedicat vos omni-
potens Deus, Pater, et
Filius , et Spiritus
Sanctus.

R^v. Amen.

May almighty God
bless you: the Father,
and the Son , and
the Holy Ghost.

R^v. Amen.

A few prayers for the Church and the Pope are then usually said by all.

FORMULA OF GENERAL ABSOLUTION

The days on which the following General Absolution or Blessing may be given to Oblates are mentioned on page 26 of this Manual. To this blessing is attached a *plenary indulgence*, under the usual conditions.

The formulas here given are from the Roman Ritual (*Tit. VIII, c. 33, II; and Bened. Reserv. II, n. 5*). The longer formula is to be used when this absolution is given publicly to a group of Oblates. The shorter forms, as indicated below, are used in the confessional, immediately after the priest has given the Oblate sacramental absolution.

LONGER FORMULA

The Abbot, or priest delegated by him, vested in surplice and violet stole, stands facing the altar, and says:

Ant. Intret oratio
mea in conspectu tuo,
Domine; inclina aurem
tuam ad preces nostras;
parce, Domine, parce
populo tuo, quem re-
dimisti sanguine tuo
pretioso, ne in aeter-
num irascaris nobis.

Ant. Let my prayer
enter into your sight,
O Lord; incline your
ear unto our prayers;
spare, O Lord, spare
your people, whom
you have redeemed by
your precious blood;
be not angry with us
for ever.

Kyrie eleison. Christe eleison. Kyrie eleison.

Pater noster (*silently*)

V. Et ne nos inducas in temptationem.

R. Sed libera nos a malo.

V. Salvos fac servos tuos.

R. Deus meus, sperantes in te.

V. Mitte eis, Domine, auxilium de sancto.

R. Et de Sion tuere eos.

V. Esto eis, Domine, turris fortitudinis.

R. A facie inimici.

V. Nihil proficiat inimicus in nobis.

R. Et filius iniquitatis non apponat nocere nobis.

Lord, have mercy on us. Christ, have mercy on us. Lord, have mercy on us.

Our Father (*silently*)

V. And lead us not into temptation.

R. But deliver us from evil.

V. Save your servants.

R. Who hope in you, O my God.

V. Send them help, O Lord, from your Holy Place.

R. And out of Sion protect them.

V. Be unto them, O Lord, a tower of strength.

R. Against the enemy.

V. Let not the enemy prevail against us.

R. Nor let the devil draw near to hurt us.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobis-
cum.

R. Et cum spiritu
tuo.

Oremus

Deus, cui proprium est misereri semper et parcere, suscipe depreciationm nostram, ut nos, et omnes famulos tuos, quos delictorum catena constringit, miseratione tuae pietatis clementer absolvat.

Exaudi, quaesumus,
Domine, supplicum
preces, et confitentium
tibi parce peccatis: ut
pariter nobis indulgen-
tiā tribuas benignus
et pacem.

V. O Lord, hear my prayer.

R. And let my cry come unto you.

V. The Lord be with you.

R. And with your spirit.

Let us pray

O God, whose special attribute it is always to have mercy and to spare, receive our humble petition: so that we and all your servants, who are bound by the chains of sin, may be graciously absolved by the compassion of your loving goodness.

Hear the prayers of your suppliants, we beseech you, O Lord, and forgive the sins of those who confess them to you: so that you may graciously grant us both pardon and peace.

Ineffabilem nobis,
Domine, misericordiam
tuam clementer ostende: ut simul nos et a
peccatis omnibus exuas, et a poenis, quas
pro his meremur, eripiias.

Deus, qui culpa
offenderis, paenitentia
placaris: preces populi
tui supplicantis propiti-
tius respice; et flagella
tuiae iracundiae, quae
pro peccatis nostris
meremur, averte. Per
Christum Dominum
nostrum.

R. Amen.

All those present now recite the Confiteor:

Confiteor Deo omni-
potenti, beatae Mariae
semper Virgini, beato
Michaeli Archangelo,
beato Joanni Baptista,
sanctis Apostolis Petro

Graciously show un-
to us, O Lord, your
unspeakable mercy: so
that you may at the
same time both free us
from all our sins, and
deliver us from the
punishment which we
deserve for them.

O God, who by sin
are offended and by
penance appeased:
mercifully regard the
prayers of your suppli-
ant people; and turn
away the scourges of
your wrath, which we
deserve for our sins.
Through Christ our
Lord.

R. Amen.

I confess to almighty
God, to blessed Mary
ever Virgin, to blessed
Michael the Archangel,
to blessed John the
Baptist, to the holy

et Paulo, BEATO PATRI NOSTRO BENE-DICTO, omnibus Sanctis, et tibi, pater, quia peccavi nimis cogitatione, verbo et opere: mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa. Ideo precor beatam Mariam semper Virginem, beatum Michaelm Archangelum, beatum Joannem Baptis-tam, sanctos Apostolos Petrum et Paulum, BEATUM PATREM NOSTRUM BENE-DICTUM, omnes Sanctos, et te, pater, orare pro me ad Dominum Deum nostrum.

Apostles Peter and Paul, TO OUR HOLY FATHER BENEDICT, to all the Saints, and to you, Father, that I have sinned exceedingly in thought, word and deed, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault. Therefore, I beseech blessed Mary ever Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist, the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, OUR HOLY FATHER BENEDICT, all the Saints, and you, Father, to pray to the Lord our God for me.

The Abbot, or priest, then says the following, standing at the Epistle side of the altar and facing the Oblates:

Misereatur vestri omnipotens Deus, et dismissis peccatis vestris,

May almighty God have mercy upon you, and forgive you your

perducat vos ad vitam aeternam.

R. Amen.

Indulgientiam **†**, absolutionem, et remissionem peccatorum vestrorum, tribuat vobis omnipotens et misericors Dominus.

R. Amen.

DOMINUS NOSTER JESUS CHRISTUS, qui beato Petro Apostolo dedit potestatem ligandi atque solvendi, ille vos absolvat ab omni vinculo delictorum, ut habeatis vitam aeternam et vivatis in saecula saeculorum. Amen.

Per sacratissimam passionem et mortem Domini nostri Jesu Christi, precibus et meritis beatissimae semper Virginis Mariae, beatorum Apostolorum Petri et Pauli,

sins, and bring you unto life everlasting.

R. Amen.

May the almighty and merciful Lord grant you pardon **†**, absolution, and remission of your sins.

R. Amen.

MAY OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, who did give blessed Peter the power to bind and to loose, free you from every bond of sin, that you may have life everlasting and live forever and ever. Amen.

Through the most sacred passion and death of our Lord Jesus Christ, by the prayers and merits of the most blessed Mary ever Virgin, of the holy Apostles Peter and Paul, of

beati Patris nostri BENEDICTI, et omnium Sanctorum, auctoritate a Summis Pontificibus mihi commissa, plenariam indulgentiam omnium peccatorum vestrorum vobis impertior. In nomine Patris, et Filii †, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

our holy Father BENE-DICT, and of all the Saints, and by the au-thority granted to me by the Supreme Pon-tiffs, I impart to you a plenary indulgence of all your sins. In the name of the Father, and of the Son †, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

SHORT FORMULA

If this General Absolution is given immediate-ly after sacramental absolution, in the confes-sional, the confessor, omitting all the rest, begins with the words: DOMINUS NOSTER JESUS CHRISTUS, etc., and continues to the end, as given above, changing the plural form into the singular wherever necessary.

SHORTER FORMULA

If the number of penitents is large and cir-cumstances do not permit the use of the preced-ing short formula, the confessor may then omit all else and use merely the following simple for-mula:

Auctoritate a Summis Pontificibus mihi concessa, plenariam omnium peccatorum tuorum indulgentiam tibi impertior. In nomine Patris, et Filii **†**, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.

By the authority granted to me by the Supreme Pontiffs, I impart to you a plenary indulgence of all your sins. In the name of the Father, and of the Son **†**, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

PART FOUR

THE MEDAL-CROSS OF ST. BENEDICT

At a witch trial in Natternburg, Bavaria, in 1647, the accused women told their judges that they could do no harm to the monks of the ancient Abbey of Saint Michael at Metten because of the lettered crosses painted on the walls of the cloister. As long as anyone could remember there had been crosses on those walls, but no one knew the meaning of the letters on them. Even so, the power of the reverent use of them was acknowledged. It is certain that these crosses were imprinted on medals before 1665, and they soon spread throughout Europe. This was the beginning of the Medal-Cross of St. Benedict.

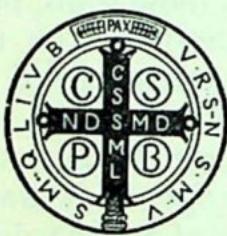
In 1720 a Gospel-Book of 1415 was found in the Abbey of Metten which explained the meaning of the letters. Fifty years later a medal with its special blessing was approved and richly indulgenced by Pope Benedict XIV. The blessing

then approved is still used at the present time, and the Medal-Cross is the only medal which still has a special blessing in the Roman Ritual.

A Medal-Cross is any medal on which is an image of St. Benedict on one side, and on the other, a cross and the letters proper to the Cross of St. Benedict.

The Jubilee Medal is a special medal first stamped in 1880 in honor of the fourteenth centenary of the birth of St. Benedict, and coined only under the authority of the Archabbot of Monte Cassino. This medal was specially indulged by Pius IX.

DESCRIPTION OF THE JUBILEE MEDAL



On the front of the Jubilee Medal of St. Benedict is a cross with the letters as found on the walls of the Abbey at Metten. On the back is an image of St. Benedict.

The four letters in the angles of the cross

C	S
P	B

stand for the Latin words, "*Crux Sancti Patris Benedicti*: the Cross of the holy Father Benedict."

On the cross itself are the letters

C	
S	
S	
M	
L	
and	
N D S M D	

which stand for, "*Crux Sacra Sit Mihi Lux; Non Draco Sit Mihi Dux*: May the Holy Cross Be My Light; Let the Dragon Not Be My Guide."

Around the margin are the letters

V R S N S M V S M Q L I V B

which stand for the following verses:

<i>Vade Retro Satana!</i>	Begone Satan!
<i>Nunquam Saude Mihi Vana.</i>	Never suggest vain things to me.
<i>Sunt Mala Quae Libas:</i>	What you offer me is evil;
<i>Ipse Venena Bibas.</i>	Drink the poison your- self!

Above the cross is the word "PAX: Peace," the traditional motto of Benedictines.

On the back of the medal is a figure of St. Benedict holding a cross and the Holy Rule. On his right is the poisoned cup which he broke with the sign of the cross made over it. At his left is the raven who carried away a poisoned loaf of bread which had been sent to the Patriarch as a gift.

Above the cup and the raven are the words "*Crux S. Patris Benedicti: The Cross of the holy Father Benedict.*"

Around the edge of the medal are the words, *EIUS IN OBITU NOSTRO PRAESENTIA MUNIAMUR*: "May we be strengthened by his presence at our death."

Below the image of St. Benedict, the place and date of first coinage are given: "EX S M CAS-SINO MDCCCLXXX, Archabbey of Monte Cassino, 1880."

EFFICACY AND USE OF THE MEDAL

The value and efficacy of the Medal of St. Benedict depend on the faith and devotion with which it is worn. Properly used, the Medal is a powerful protection against storms, pestilences, sickness, and poisons, as can be seen from the formula for blessing; but it is especially blessed

to protect those who use it from the snares and deceptions of the devil.

No special manner of carrying or applying the Medal is prescribed. It may be worn around the neck, attached to a rosary, or carried about on one's person in any other way. It may be dipped in liquids to be given to the sick or applied to their wounds. It is often put in the foundations of buildings or hung on the walls of them, or attached to autos, dynamos, and other important machinery to call down God's blessing and the protection of St. Benedict.

INDULGENCES ATTACHED TO THE MEDAL

The Medal of St. Benedict has been richly indulged. Those who habitually carry a properly blessed Jubilee Medal of St. Benedict may gain:

1. A Plenary Indulgence under the usual conditions of Confession and Communion, on the following days:

- Epiphany (January 6)
- St. Maurus (January 15)
- Purification of our Lady (February 2)
- St. Scholastica (February 10)
- St. Benedict (March 21)
- Annunciation (March 25)
- Assumption (August 15)

Birth of our Lady (September 8)
Dedication of the Church of Monte Cassino
(October 1)
St. Placid (October 5)
All Saints (November 1)
All Benedictine Saints (November 13)
St. Gertrude (November 17)
Immaculate Conception (December 8)
Christmas (December 25)
Easter Sunday
Ascension Thursday
Pentecost Sunday
Trinity Sunday
Corpus Christi
and once a year on any convenient day
selected once for all by the Oblate.

2. A Plenary Indulgence is granted at the hour of death on condition that the dying person recommend his soul to God and receive the sacraments, or when unable to do this, to make an act of contrition and invoke with his lips or at least in his heart, the holy names of Jesus and Mary.

3. The indulgences granted to those who receive the blessing bestowed by the Pope upon the people on *Holy Thursday* and *Easter Sunday* can be gained on these days by those who habitually carry the Medal, provided they receive the sacraments and pray according to the intentions of the Holy Father.

4. A Partial Indulgence of seven years and seven quarantines can be gained on any of the following days:

- all the feasts of our Lord not listed above
- all the feasts of our Lady not listed above
- all the feasts of the Apostles
- St. Maurus (January 15)
- St. Scholastica (February 10)
- St. Joseph (March 19)
- St. Placid (October 5)
- St. Gertrude (November 17)

This same indulgence can be gained by attendance at Mass or by offering a stipend to have a Mass celebrated for the welfare of Christian princes and for peace among nations. It can likewise be gained by fasting on Fridays in honor of the Passion of Christ, or on Saturdays in honor of our Lady. Those who maintain either of the above fasts throughout the entire year are granted a Plenary Indulgence, after the reception of the sacraments.

5. Remission of the third part of the punishment due to their sins is granted to those who, by their good example or advice, lead a sinner to repentance.

6. An indulgence of twenty years can be gained, once a week, by those who daily pray for the extirpation of heresy.

All the indulgences attached to the Medal of

St. Benedict are applicable to the souls in Purgatory.

As to the numerous other indulgences not here mentioned, it would be good for those who wear the Medal to have the daily intention of gaining all the indulgences granted for wearing it.

BLESSING OF THE MEDAL OF ST. BENEDICT

There are two formulas by which the Medal of St. Benedict can be blessed. Both of these are found in the Roman Ritual (Appendix: Benedictiones Propriae, nn. 31 & 32), and both are reserved to the Benedictine Order. The blessing may be given by any priest of the Benedictine Order or by any other priest who has obtained the necessary faculties from the Abbot Primate in Rome or from the Archabbot of Monte Cassino, or from the Abbot President of any of the Benedictine Congregations.

The shorter formula is given here.

V. Adjutorium nos-
trum in nomine Do-
mini.

R. Qui fecit caelum
et terram.

Exorcizo vos (*te*), nu-
mismata (*numisma*),

V. Our help is in
the name of the Lord.

R. Who made heav-
en and earth.

I do exorcize you, O
medals (*O medal*), by

per Deum Patrem † omnipotentem, qui fecit caelum et terram, mare et omnia quae in eis sunt. Omnis virtus adversarii, omnis incursum, omne phantasma satanae eradicare et effugare ab his (*hoc*) numismatibus (*numismate*): ut fiant (*fiat*) omnibus qui eis (*eo*) usuri sunt, salus mentis et corporis: in nomine Pa† tris omnipotentis, et Iesu † Christi Filii ejus, Domini nostri, et Spiritus † Sancti Paracleti, et in caritate ejusdem Domini nostri Iesu Christi, qui venturus est judicare vivos et mortuos, et saeculum per ignem.

R. Amen.

God the Father † almighty, who made heaven and earth, the sea, and all things that are in them. May all the power of the enemy, all the devil's legions, and every attack and illusion of Satan be removed and driven out from these (*this*) medals (*medal*): so that they (*it*) may become a source of health to soul and body for all who shall make use of them (*it*): in the name of the Father † almighty, and of Jesus † Christ his Son, our Lord, and of the Holy † Ghost the Paraclete, and in the love of the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who shall come to judge the living and the dead, and the world by fire.

R. Amen.

V. Domine, exaudi orationem meam.

R. Et clamor meus ad te veniat.

V. Dominus vobis-
cum.

R. Et cum spiritu
tuo.

Oremus

Deus omnipotens,
bonorum omnium lar-
gitor, supplices te ro-
gamus, ut per interces-
sionem sancti Benedicti
his sacris numismati-
bus (*huic sacro numis-
mati*) tuam bene  dictionem infundas, ut
omnes qui ea (*id*) ges-
taverint ac bonis operi-
bus intenti fuerint,
sanitatem mentis et cor-
poris, et gratiam sanc-
tificationis, atque indulgentias (*nobis*) con-
cessas consequi merean-
tur, omnesque diaboli
insidias et fraudes, per

V. O Lord, hear my
prayer.

R. And let my cry
come unto you.

V. The Lord be
with you.

R. And with your
spirit.

Let us pray

O almighty God,
giver of all good things,
we humbly beseech you
that through the inter-
cession of St. Benedict,
you would pour forth
your bless  ing upon
these (*this*) Sacred
Medals (*Medal*) so that
all who shall wear
them (*it*) and earnest-
ly strive to perform
good works, may de-
serve to obtain health
of soul and body, the
grace of increasing
holiness, and the in-
dulgences granted (*to
us*): and that they may

auxilium misericordiae tuae, studeant devitare et in conspectu tuo sancti et immaculati valeant apparere. Per Christum Dominum nostrum.

R. Amen.

The priest then sprinkles the medals with holy water.

strive, by the help of your mercy, to escape all the snares and deceptions of the devil, and thus be able to appear holy and stainless in your sight. Through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

BOOK LIST

The following publications are recommended for those who desire further reading material or would like to have the complete text of the Holy Rule or the Divine Office. We suggest that you contact your local Catholic book store for information on the current prices of these books.

The Holy Rule

Doyle, Leonard J. *St. Benedict's Rule for Monasteries*. Collegeville, Minn. St. John's Abbey Press. 1949. Available in cloth or paper binding.

Gasquet, Aidan Cardinal, O.S.B. *The Rule of St. Benedict*. London. Chatto and Windus. 1925.

Hunter-Blair, Abbot Oswald, O.S.B. *The Rule of St. Benedict*. Fort Augustus, Scotland. 1914.

Verheyen, Boniface, O.S.B. *The Holy Rule of our Most Holy Father Benedict*. Atchison, Kansas. Abbey Student Press. 1935.

Commentaries on the Holy Rule

Delatte, Abbot Paul, O.S.B. *The Rule of St. Benedict; a commentary*. Translated by Dom Justin McCann. Latrobe, Penn. St. Vincent's Archabbey Press. New printing, 1950. 508 pp. A classic, but not specifically for Oblates.

Lindsay, T. F. *The Holy Rule for Laymen*. London. Burns Oates. 1947. 160 pp.

Simon, G. A. *Commentary for Benedictine Oblates on the Rule of St. Benedict*. Translated by Leonard J. Doyle. Collegeville, Minn. St. John's Abbey Press. 1950. 511 pp. The standard commentary, arranged for daily reading.

The Life of St. Benedict

Cabrol, Abbot Fernand, O.S.B. *Saint Benedict*. London. Burns Oates. 1934. 155 pp. Considered by some to be the best life of the Saint.

Herwegen, Abbot Ildephonse, O.S.B. *St. Benedict, a character study*. St. Louis. Herder. 1924. 183 pp. An excellent study.

St. Gregory the Great. *Life and Miracles of St. Benedict*. Translated by Odo Zimmerman, O.S.B., and Benedict Avery, O.S.B. Collegeville, Minn. St. John's Abbey Press. 1949. 87 pp. A new translation of the only authentic biography of St. Benedict, written by Pope St. Gregory I within fifty years of our holy Father's death.

Schuster, Ildefonso Cardinal, O.S.B. *St. Benedict and His Times*. Translated by Gregory J. Roettger, O.S.B. St. Louis. Herder. 1951. 306 pp. Illus. The most recent life of our holy Father. Scholarly and exhaustive, it throws new light on many of the controversial points of St. Benedict's life and work.

The Divine Office

Divine Praise. St. Meinrad, Indiana. The Abbey Press. 1953. Contains the entire Benedictine Breviary except Matins. In English only. Uses a simplified arrangement so that there is only one oration for each day.

Monastic Diurnal, or The Day Hours of the Monastic Breviary. Mechlin. Dessain. 1949. (Available from St. Benedict's Convent, St. Joseph, Minnesota.) Contains the entire Benedictine Breviary except Matins, in Latin and English.

Roman Breviary in English. With the new Psalter of Pope Pius XII. Edited by Joseph A. Nelson. New York. Benziger Bros. 1950-51. 4 volumes. A complete translation of the entire Roman Breviary.

Short Breviary. Collegeville, Minn. Liturgical Press. 5th ed. 1951. A shortened and simplified version of the Roman Breviary, entirely in English. Contains all the Hours, including Matins, and gives all the seasons and principal feasts of the Church Year, but uses reduced number of Psalms and shorter Lessons.

